



Realm of Shadows and Dreams: Theatrical and Fictional Lyricism in Early Qing Literature

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Realm of Shadows and Dreams:
Theatrical and Fictional Lyricism in Early Qing Literature

A dissertation presented

by

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to

The Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

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in the subject of

East Asian Languages and Civilizations

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Realm of Shadows and Dreams: Theatrical and Fictional Lyricism in Early Qing Literature

Abstract

Early twentieth-century Chinese literary critics create a model of literary development that highlights leading genres for each dynasty. For the Ming and the Qing dynasties, these are drama and fiction. This model relegates other genres of the period, especially poetry and lyric, to a second-class status, and accounts for their less visibility in scholarly research until today. The aim of my dissertation is not to reverse the hierarchy of genres, but to break the boundaries of genres, examining the ways in which the aesthetic sensibility connected to drama and fiction is transposed to other genres and renews their conventions. The cross-genre approach used in my dissertation is supported by an overview of the literary scene of the period, when literati took up diverse roles from scholar-officials to professional dramatists, novelists, and painters, when the boundaries between “high” and “low” genres became more fluid and literati wrote across elite and popular genres, and when illustrations of printed plays and fiction, thanks to the rise of print culture, circulated widely and inspired the literati’s cross-media imagination. Social practices of Ming and Qing literati, such as going to the theater, reading and writing commentary on drama and fiction, appreciating illustrations of printed plays and fiction, or listening to story-telling, translated into an awareness of the commensurability of life and theater (*theatrum mundi*), bringing role play, playfulness, staging, and fictional time and space to the reading and writing of other genres, creating textual and aesthetic hybridity in these latter genres. I use the term theatrical/fictional lyricism to refer to the ways in which drama and fiction, commentary on drama and fiction, and illustrations to drama and fiction change the conventions of reading and writing poetry and prose in terms of rhetoric and theme. The term also draws attention to the

textual and aesthetic hybridity in these genres. Theatrical/fictional lyricism is a new form of lyricism, in which role play gives a twist to the genuine poetic voice, the records of real events gives way to self-conscious fictionality, and normal time and space merges with staged, illusory time and space.

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My parents and grandparents have sustained me with unconditional love and support. It is to them that I dedicate my dissertation.

Introduction

Early twentieth-century Chinese literary critics create a model of literary development that highlights leading genres for each dynasty. For the Ming and the Qing dynasties, these are drama and fiction. This model relegates other genres of the period, especially poetry and lyric, to a second-class status, and accounts for their less visibility in scholarly research until today. The aim of my dissertation is not to reverse the hierarchy of genres, but to break the boundaries of genres, examining the ways in which the aesthetic sensibility connected to drama and fiction is transposed to other genres and renews their conventions. The cross-genre approach used in my dissertation is supported by an overview of the literary scene of the period, when literati took up diverse roles from scholar-officials to professional dramatists, novelists, and painters, when the boundaries between “high” and “low” genres became more fluid and literati wrote across elite and popular genres, and when illustrations of printed plays and fiction, thanks to the rise of print culture, circulated widely and inspired the literati’s cross-media imagination. Social practices of Ming and Qing literati, such as going to the theater, reading and writing commentary on drama and fiction, appreciating illustrations of printed plays and fiction, or listening to story-telling, translated into an awareness of the commensurability of life and theater (*theatrum mundi*), bringing role play, playfulness, staging, and fictional time and space to the reading and writing of other genres, creating textual and aesthetic hybridity in these latter genres. I use the term theatrical/fictional lyricism to refer to the ways in which drama and fiction, commentary on drama and fiction, and illustrations to drama and fiction change the conventions of reading and writing poetry and prose in terms of rhetoric and theme. The term also draws attention to the textual and aesthetic hybridity in these genres. Theatrical/fictional lyricism is a new form of lyricism, in which role play gives a twist to the genuine poetic voice, the records of real events

gives way to self-conscious fictionality, and normal time and space merges with staged, illusory time and space.

The historical context of my dissertation is the fall of the Ming dynasty and the consolidation of Qing rule in the mid and late seventeenth century, a vibrant period in Chinese literary and cultural history. To cultural figures who crossed the Ming-Qing divide, the theatrical and fictional imagination of the self and the world proved to be an effective strategy of coping with the political turmoil during the dynastic transition. Regarding men as actors and the world as representation are two characteristics shared by early Qing literati who practiced theatrical/fictional lyricism. My study of theatrical and fictional lyricism associates early Qing literature with the intellectual and cultural trends of the Ming, especially the late Ming (ca. 1550-1644), illuminating linkages and changes between late Ming and early Qing and demonstrating how salient characteristics of late Ming culture extended into early Qing regardless of the dynastic transition. My study also situates theatrical/fictional lyricism in the context of political turmoil, revealing the ways whereby theatricality and fictionality helped “remnant subjects” (*yimin*) transform traumatic experiences into art, rethink selfhood and identity, and redefine the world they lived in.

The first chapter “Lyrical Self and Theatrical Self: Mapping the Literary World in Early Qing” lays the groundwork for the dissertation with a survey of the different perspectives of early Qing intellectuals on the meanings of writing and being a writer in the context of political turmoil. I take the great Confucian thinker Huang Zongxi (1610-1695) and the renowned novelist and playwright Li Yu (1611-1680) as the representatives of two groups of intellectuals. Huang Zongxi, representing the “remnant subjects” loyal to the fallen Ming dynasty, appropriates late Ming aesthetic sensibility and gives a moral twist to it. He claims that avowing loyalty to the

fallen dynasty and enduring sufferings are ways of asserting a moral force that renews Chinese civilization. He revolutionizes the orthodox Confucian poetics of gentleness and restraint (*wenrou dunhou*) and encourages early Qing literati to express intense, extreme emotions held in check in Confucian self-cultivation. By infusing moral significance to the late Ming cult of passion, he constructs the conception of a lyrical self that perseveres in the confrontation between the self and an alienating political reality in terms of intense emotions and moral commitment. At the other end of the spectrum, Li Yu represents a group of literati who insist on the ornaments and pleasures of literati culture, and in doing so seems to defy the traumatic experiences of the dynastic transition. By resorting to dramatic impersonation, the cultural trend reflected in and heightened by theatrical culture in the late Ming, and by invoking Daoist and Buddhist discourses of negating selfhood, he constructs the conception of a theatrical self and claims to banish suffering and achieve happiness in role play. The tension between the conceptions of lyrical self and theatrical self parallels the tension between Huang Zongxi's moral-political engagement and Li Yu's playful detachment, but in the next four chapters we will see how the conception of the theatrical self extends from drama and fiction to other genres, and that moral-political engagement and playful detachment do not represent a fixed dichotomy.

The second chapter "All the World Is a Stage: Reading Poetry as Drama and Fiction" examines the early Qing intellectuals' hermeneutic approach to poetry under the influence of drama and fiction. I focus on poetry commentary by the ingenious yet overlooked literary critic Wu Qi (1615-1675). He links poetry commentary to the Confucian tradition, but his interpretive methods, from the use of technical terms and psychological analysis to the tendency to decipher fictional protagonists and scenarios in poems, reflect the influence of drama and fiction commentary popular since the late Ming. Wu Qi's reading of poetry in terms of drama and

fiction commentary not only redefines the latter and renews poetic criticism by playful engagement in a manner typical of the late Ming intellectual world, it also reflects his way of dealing with political crisis by linking withdrawal to role play. The paradoxes in the poetic criticism of Wu Qi feature a twofold tension, one between the tradition of poetry as a serious vocation and the late Ming spirit of playfulness, and the other between late Ming sensibility and early Qing historical context, revealing the cross-currents of contradictory values in early Qing culture.

The third chapter “Catching Shadows: Wang Fuzhi’s Lyrics and Commentary on Poetry” examines the ways early Qing literati inherit and reinterpret the late Ming expositions of theatrical metaphors. By examining Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics, this chapter attempts to make a cross-genre comparison and explore the interplay between literature and philosophy against the backdrop of political trauma. It focuses on Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows of nature, of figures in shadow plays and of himself as well as his critical term “catching shadow” that involves his thoughts on the relationship between life and theater. His lyrics on shadows draw on the vocabulary and framework of the theater. By doing so he emphasizes human beings’ loss of agency and their futile endeavors. These lyrics also weave the metaphor of life as a play with the philosophy of *Zhuangzi* and Buddhism—both of which resonate with theatrical culture—to explore the precariousness of moral judgments at a time of political and moral collapse. His critical term “catching shadow” reflects the intricate play of feeling, visuality, and the concept of theatrical self-division. Both his lyrics and his critical term show the influence of Buddhism in the sense that shadows are objects of consciousness as defined within the cognitive theory of Buddhism. Thus, from the perspective of formal innovation, Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics change lyrical convention by adding a fictional dimension to it under the influence of theatrical culture as well

as Daoist and Buddhist sources. From the perspective of thematic innovation, his lyrics explore the issues of free will, fate, and moral/historical judgments. These issues are rarely found in conventional lyrics, but they are central concerns in theatrical culture, and their philosophical and lyrical configuration in Wang Fuzhi's song lyrics demonstrates the "theatrical turn" in early Qing lyricism.

The fourth chapter "History as Puppet Theater: Ballad Narratives on History" examines the interrelated ways of perceiving the relationship between history and theater in the ballad narratives written by Jia Fuxi (1590-1674) and Gui Zhuang (1613-1673). I begin with a discussion of the ballad narrative written by their predecessor Yang Shen (1488-1559). Yang Shen views historical actors as puppets controlled by unpredictable fate, creating a stage upon which life is enacted as a virtual theater. In his view, since theater can be human action and written plays can be performed again and again, theater is the metaphor for both temporary human life and ever-lasting history. He believes that plays save human life from emptiness as historical records do. Thus the commensurability between theater and history in Yang Shen's ballad-narrative expresses both lyrical lament for the transience of human existence and the attempt to achieve immortality through writing and performance. Jia Fuxi and Gui Zhuang transform Yang Shen's views of history as a puppet theater in the aftermath of political turmoil. They mix the sarcastic, playful rhetoric of the theater with their anger toward corrupt politics and lyrical lamentation over the Ming, making the fall of the Ming a tragicomedy. Jia Fuxi's ballad narrative is full of irony and invective. He views historical actors as puppets driven by selfish motives, creating a curious dialogue between the celebration of his own pursuit of self-interest and his morally based criticism of history. His satire of Chinese history as a puppet theater and his lament for Ming collapse form an interesting contrast. Without resolving the incongruities in

his value system and writing style, he ends up resorting to the rhetoric of theater to detach history from moral judgments. An important point of comparison is Gui Zhuang, who attempts to reestablish justice through writing, making his ballad narrative a powerful weapon against injustice. He regards history as a puppet theater and the historian as a puppet player, because the idea not only allows him to be the creator and interpreter of history but also gives him the expressive freedom that is impossible in historiography. After offering clear-cut judgments of good and evil as the historian/dramatist, Gui Zhuang ends his narrative by claiming to transcend the theatrical world and to become a fisherman and woodcutter in the lyrical world.

In the last chapter, “Writing, Dreaming, and Painting: Redefining Time and Space,” I examine early Qing literati’s attempt to redefine time and space in the context of political turmoil, focusing on their portrayal of the Peach Blossom Spring—Tao Yuanming’s (365?-427) imagination of an idyllic utopia—in literature and painting both as a lyrical space and a theatrical/fictional space. I draw on Zhang Dai’s (1597-1684) essay, Dong Yue’s (1620-1686) essay, poetry, and novel, and Xiao Yuncong’s (1596-1673) twelve album leaves of *Landscapes* (1645) as examples. In Zhang Dai’s essay on the calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring, the Peach Blossom Spring is different from any place in the world because it does not have a calendar and is therefore independent of dynastic chronology. He imagines creating the calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring that follows the rhythm of nature to regulate time that is otherwise regulated by the dynastic calendar, the symbol of the authoritative sociopolitical order. The new calendar redefines time, and redefining time is a way of escaping the current sociopolitical circumstances. Creating imaginary space coincides with creating imaginary time, and dreams best represent the combination of both. Dong Yue claims to have made a calendar for dreams and calls himself the historian of dreams. Just as the Peach Blossom Spring is isolated from

dynastic time and history, Dong Yue experiences and perceives time and space differently in his dreams. The expansion, distortion, and duplication of space in his essays on dreams parallel lyrical space in his poetry and fictional space in his novel *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors*, manifesting variations of the Peach Blossom Spring and reflecting the dreamer's desire to create a realm beyond the chaotic human world during the dynastic transition. The construction of variations of the Peach Blossom Spring is closely related to the tendency of early Qing literati to interpret history and politics in pictorial space. Inspired by illustrations to drama and fiction, Dong Yue wants to draw illustrations to *Shiji*. The result is not painted images, but verbal descriptions of historical actors and events metamorphosing into the momentum of mountains and the movements of rivers. His cross-media imagination of history indicates the significance of pictorial space in understanding history.

My dissertation tries to portray a large picture of early Qing literary culture by analyzing the ways in which the aesthetic sensibility connected to drama and fiction permeates poetry and prose. My study encompasses “high” and “low” literary genres as well as visual culture. It examines works by southern (*Jiangnan*) and northern literati who have not received sufficient attention from scholars, as well as the less known works of famous writers. This investigation of overlooked sources fills a gap in scholarship and broadens our understanding of early Qing literary culture and early Qing innovation in the Chinese poetic tradition. My dissertation contributes to current scholarship on the trauma of Ming collapse and its transcendence in early Qing by examining different groups of literati whose moral and historical choice coincide with their reinterpretation of the influence of drama and fiction and their unprecedented cultural experiments. The questions my dissertation addresses also have a larger significance. How new life is breathed into an old culture in the age of sociopolitical conflicts and crisis is an issue of

central importance for many cultures in today's world. The relationship between trauma and writing is a common theme across many different areas of research. The ways early Qing literati define themselves and respond to traumatic experiences by cultural expression find parallels in the reaction of twentieth-century Chinese intellectuals to national crisis and also provide a basis for dialogues with many other cultures facing similar situations.

Chapter One

Lyrical Self and Theatrical Self: Mapping the Literary World in the Early Qing

This chapter lays the groundwork for the dissertation with a survey of the different perspectives of early Qing intellectuals on the meanings of writing and being a writer in the context of political turmoil. I take the great Confucian thinker Huang Zongxi (1610-1695) and the renowned novelist and playwright Li Yu (1611-1680) as the representatives of two groups of intellectuals. Huang Zongxi, representing the “remnant subjects” (*yimin*) loyal to the fallen Ming dynasty, appropriates late Ming aesthetic sensibility and gives a moral twist to it. He claims that avowing loyalty to the fallen dynasty and enduring sufferings are ways of asserting a moral force that renews Chinese civilization. He revolutionizes the orthodox Confucian poetics of gentleness and restraint (*wenrou dunhou* 溫柔敦厚) and encourages early Qing literati to express intense emotions held in check in Confucian self-cultivation. By infusing moral significance to the late Ming cult of passion, he constructs the conception of a lyrical self that perseveres in the confrontation between the self and an alienating political reality in terms of intense emotions and moral commitment. At the other end of the spectrum, Li Yu represents a group of literati who insist on the ornaments and pleasures of literati culture, and in doing so seem to defy the traumatic experiences of the dynastic transition. By resorting to dramatic impersonation, the cultural trend reflected in and heightened by theatrical culture in the late Ming, and by invoking Daoist and Buddhist discourses of negating selfhood, he constructs the conception of a theatrical self and claims to banish suffering and achieve happiness in role play. The tension between the conceptions of lyrical self and theatrical self parallels the tension between Huang Zongxi’s moral-political engagement and Li Yu’s playful detachment.

Viewed from historical hindsight, the culture of the late Ming is analogous to an overripe fruit, with its incipient decay exuding an intoxicating aroma. The culture itself had reached maturity in many fields, represented by the literati's sophisticated reflections on individuality and subjectivity, and the heretical alienation from the classical tradition. However, this cultural maturity preceded the fall of the Ming Dynasty, exciting the early Qing literati's debates on the moral obligation of culture. Was the fall of the Ming dynasty a consequence of the late-Ming culture, which celebrated passion and sensuality, and radically assessed the authoritative tradition? Or, was it mere coincidence that a culture so indulgent of subjectivity was followed by the political failure of the Ming government? In general, should culture concern itself with morals and social responsibility? Why does a culture of great accomplishments—represented in unbridled subjectivity, a profound suspicion of authority, and exquisite taste—herald moral decadence and political collapse? What moral approaches can be taken to culture? These questions perplex great minds in many cultures with lingering significance both in the past and present day. The early Qing intellectual and literary figures in this study addressed these questions as their primary concerns. The early Qing literati, as bearers of the defeated, conquered late-Ming culture, had to face the traumatic consequence of the Manchu conquest, which lent tragic intensity to their reflections on the moral obligation of culture.

Suffering and pain are key words in the early Qing literati's writings that discuss the moral obligation of literature and literati. For example, Gui Zhuang 歸莊 (1613-1673), a heroic leader of the underground anti-Qing resistance, differentiated minor misfortunes from greater misfortunes. According to his view, personal misfortunes such as unfulfilled aspiration and poverty are minor compared to the fall of the country; only when poets experience both minor and greater misfortunes can they create works that have far reaching significance, because

misfortunes lead to frustration, which further contributes to great literary works.¹ Like Gui Zhuang, a group of early Qing literati who regarded themselves as the remnant subjects of the Ming Dynasty ennobled suffering and pain and attributed moral value to them. For them inheriting the defeated culture and bearing the hardships of being a representative of the defeat culture was a way of displaying moral force, a force that breathed real life to literature and art.

Both minor and greater misfortunes are socially and politically contingent. The remnant subjects' focus on the suffering that is caused by sociopolitical vicissitudes led their eyes to the external world, where alienating sociopolitical relations created unending pain. The remnant subjects' pain was essentially the confrontation between the individuated selfhood and sociopolitical relations. However, human beings also have to confront socio-politically irrelevant pain, the ephemeral yet boring life, the dissatisfaction to one's own being, the anguish to one's disfigured body and lack of talent, the unexpected end of happiness, loss of the desirable objects, torment of illness, and inevitable death, all the existential pain that even the best historical era and government cannot evade. Undoubtedly, there is no such thing as a clear watershed between the pain caused by sociopolitical reasons and socio-politically irrelevant pain, since they are often intertwined. The fact that the remnant subjects were occupied with the political trauma during the dynastic transition let them intertwine existential pain with sociopolitical pain and interpret the interior life from a sociopolitical perspective. At the other end of the spectrum, the literati who inherited the late Ming theatrical culture interpreted the interior life from a more personal perspective. They paid more attention to existential pain than sociopolitical pain and believed that the key to happiness was to transcend the concept of self by means of role play. The question posed to both the early Qing literati and later critics is whether exploring existential

¹ Gui Zhuang, "Preface to Wu Yuchang's Poetry Collection" 吳余常詩稿序, in Wang Yunxi 王運熙 and Gu Yisheng 顧易生, *Qingdai wenlunxuan* 清代文論選 (Beijing: renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1999), p. 133.

pain in an era of political cataclysm a form of immoral and irresponsible historical escapism. Are the literary works that are amoral are simultaneously immoral when moral sensibility dominates the time and literary arena? In this chapter, I will delineate the early Qing literati's two conceptions of the relationship between suffering and literature, trace their respective manifestos back to the late Ming culture, analyze the ways whereby their conceptions innovate on the traditional Confucian poetics, and hope to answer these questions.

Discourse on Suffering and Solitude in Early-Qing Writings

The most ardent spokesman of the literary statements of the early Qing remnant subjects is Huang Zongxi 黄宗羲 (1610-1695), one of the three prominent thinkers in the early Qing (Two others are Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 [1613-1682] and Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 [1619-1692])². He wrote a large number of prefaces to the literary collections by his friends and relatives, declaring the moral power of writers and writings. To be a moral writer, according to Huang Zongxi, means to be a solitary and often isolated individual. In the preface to his younger brother Huang Zonghui's 黄宗會 (1622-1680) poetry and essay collection, written in 1674, thirty years after the demise of the Ming, Huang Zongxi coins an epithet the "solitary man" (*airen* 隘人) to describe Huang Zonghui's character.

He is firm and upright, unable to humble himself; he is lofty and honest, unable to get along in the world. He is what the ancients call the solitary man, lonely and proud, lacking confederates. He is narrow-minded, so he cannot tolerate himself as well as others. He rejects others because of his solitary character and inner resentment, wandering about and weeping at the top of mountains and the bank of rivers. Even though he is impoverished in his life, his writing will survive after his death. In this way honor and humiliation are balanced. ... Zewang is one of those whose body may be bent, but whose words cannot be suppressed, as Su Shi put it. Zewang represents a deviation from literati.

² The idea of the "three great thinkers" of the early Qing is a relatively late formulation. It is especially so for Wang Fuzhi. His ascension to prominence is due to the effort of the late-Qing Hunan scholar-officials. See Qin Chunyan 秦春燕, *Qingmo minchu de wanming xiangxiang* 清末民初的晚明想像 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2008), chapter one.

蓋其為人，勁直而不能屈己，清剛而不能善世，介特寡徒，古之所謂隘人也。隘則胸不容物，並不能自容。其以孤憤絕人，彷徨痛哭於山巔水滙之際，……即或憔悴終生，其篇章未有不流傳身後，亦是榮辱屈伸之相折。……蘇子瞻所謂“能折困其身而不能屈其言”者，至澤望而又為文人之一變焉。³

The literal meaning of *airen* is the “narrow-minded man,” but Huang Zongxi uses the seemingly pejorative term to emphasize that Huang Zonghui stood out among people by his lofty character. The intellectual source of this term can be found in the “singular man” 畸人 from *Zhungzi* 莊子. “The singular man is singular in comparison to other men, but a companion of Heaven. So it is said, the petty man of Heaven is a gentleman among men; the gentleman among men is the petty man of Heaven.” 畸人者，畸於人而侔於天，故曰，天之小人，人之君子，人之君子，天之小人。⁴ The singular man departs from the normal value system, but matches the principles of Heaven. He is disapproved by the majority, but is the companion of the higher moral authority. The solitary man is a seventeenth-century version of the singular man. His distance from the world suggests his criticism of the moral decline of the world.

In addition, the description of the solitary man’s integrity and pride, as well as his experience of wandering around and weeping in the remote area clearly echoes the image of Qu Yuan 屈原, the wronged and exiled minister in the Warring States Period, who lamented his unfulfilled political aspiration in terms of writing. Though both Qu Yuan’s works and his upright personality had been worshipped since the first century B.C., when Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145?-90? BC) included his biography in *Shiji* (*Records of the Grand Historian* 史記), Confucian historians and literary critics had consistently criticized Qu Yuan as the one who was too proud and

³ *Huang Lizhou wenji* 黃梨洲文集, ed. Chen Naiqian 陳乃乾 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), p. 336.

⁴ *Zhuangzi*, vol. 6 “The Great and Venerable Teacher” 大宗師, in *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋, edited by Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), 3.273, Burton Watson’s translation.

resentful to be worldly wise.⁵ Huang Zongxi, however, deliberately selects the side of Qu Yuan orthodox Confucians had disapproved to indicate his disapproval of those who dominated the literary and political arena at his time. The solitary man is not willing to compromise his principles to please the world, nor can he tolerate those who lack moral principles. The moral significance of the “solitary man” becomes even more clear if we view it in the political context of the early Qing, when many Chinese scholar-officials left from the Ming court betrayed the former dynasty and surrendered to the new ruler, and when officialdom was filled with sycophants, who “engaged in social connections with an ingratiating smile and a pleasant countenance” 諂笑柔色以資應酬.⁶ The early Qing remnant subjects, with whom Huang Zongxi and Huang Zonghui identified with, were a small group of people who chose to alienate themselves from the political center, and some of whom participated in underground anti-Qing movements. Their self-exile was a deliberate gesture of keeping distance from the majority who succumbed to the political power, economic benefits and temptation due to their lack of commitment and loyalty. Gu Yanwu describes the deceitful nature of the majority in one entry titled “Words Are Deceitful” 文辭欺人 in his *Record of Daily Knowledge* 日知錄.

In Chinese history, no one’s writing is more deceitful than Xie Lingyun’s. Next to Xie Lingyun is Wang Wei. ... Is there such a thing as being a great man and yet serving the enemy? Now there are people who had sold themselves to the enemy (literally, those with different surnames) at the moment of destitution, but who made speeches of loyalty after being rejected by the enemy. There are also people whose names had been sullied by being registered in the illegitimate regime, but who still compared themselves to Xie Lingyun and Wang Wei. I think they are even worse than Xie and Wang. At the end of the dynasty, human feelings are more and more deceitful, and they are not ashamed of their writings. Therefore, there are people who wrote the Song of Plucking Vetch⁷ in the morning, but were exhilarated to receive the imperial call at night.

⁵ For instance, Ban Gu’s 班固 (32-92) “Preface to Lisao” 離騷序.

⁶ Huang Zongxi, “Preface to Huang Fuxian’s Poetry” 黃孚先詩序, in *Huang Lizhou wenji*, p. 343.

⁷ Two ancient recluses, Boyi and Shuqi, sing the Song of Plucking Vetch to express their loyalty to the Yin Dynasty. See *Shiji*, vol. 61.

古來以文辭欺人者，莫若謝靈運，次則王維。……天下有高人而仕賊者乎？今有顛沛之際，投身異姓，至擯斥不容，而後發為忠憤之論，與夫名汙偽籍而自託乃心，比于康樂，右丞之輩，吾見其愈下矣。末世人情彌巧，文而不慙，固有朝賦采薇之篇，而夕有捧檄之喜者。⁸

This entry shows Gu Yanwu's consistent suspicion of the moral integrity of Chinese literati. It begins with Gu's criticism of Xie Lingyun (385-433) and Wang Wei (699 or 701-761). Xie Lingyun was a scion of the great Xie clan of the Eastern Jin (317-420), but he did not resign from the post when the Song (420-479) replaced the Eastern Jin. His official career in the Song was full of ups and downs. He was accused of plotting a rebellion because his hauteur and persistent neglect of duty offended the local magistrate. He resisted arrest with armed force, and was exiled to the far south, where he was eventually executed for being involved in a rebellion.⁹ Disillusioned with his career in the Song, Xie Lingyun suggested his loyalty to the Eastern Jin by praising the loyalty of Zhang Liang (d. 185 B.C.) and Lu Zhonglian (ca.305-425 B.C.) in a poem. "When the state of Han was destroyed, Zhang Liang exerted himself to revenge Han."¹⁰ /Lu Zhonglian was shamed by the attempt of the king of Qin to proclaim himself emperor.¹¹ /They were men of rivers and oceans. /Their loyalty moved men of noble character." 韓亡子房奮，秦帝魯連恥。本自江海人，忠義動君子。¹² Wang Wei was caught up in the An Lushan Rebellion (755-763) and forced to take office in An's regime. When loyalist forces retook the capitals, he was sent to prison, but "his career was saved by a poem he had written in captivity expressing his

⁸ Huang Rucheng 黃汝成, *Rizhilu jishi* 日知錄集釋, vol. 19, p. 852.

⁹ See *Songshu* 宋書, vol. 67.

¹⁰ The ancestors of Zhang Liang were officials of Han. When Han was destroyed by Qin, Zhang Liang intended to assassinate the King of Qin to repay Han. See *Shiji*, vol. 55.

¹¹ When the Qin army invaded Zhao and the king of Qin intended to proclaim himself emperor, Lu Zhonglian declared to the general of the state of Wei that Qin would present a threat to all other states if the king of Qin was allowed to proclaim himself emperor. Lu Zhonglian persuaded Wei to help Zhao against Qin, and Qin was forced to retreat. See *Shiji*, vol. 83.

¹² Quoted in *Songshu*, vol. 67.

loyalty to the Tang.”¹³ Gu Yanwu denounces the discrepancy between their self-proclaimed loyalty and their inconsistent behavior, thinking their words are deceitful. Next, he rebukes the deceitful words and the discrepancy between real intentions and words in his contemporaries’ writings. He takes Xie Lingyun and Wang Wei as the mirrors images of lots of late Ming scholar-officials, who either played loyal to the Ming in writings after they were disappointed with the new regime, or submitted to the Qing but compared themselves to Xie and Wang to suggest that their surrender was against their will. His harsh criticism is directed to the most prominent scholar-officials of the time, including Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664) and Wu Weiye 吳偉業 (1609-1672). While serving as president of the Board of Ceremonies under the Prince of Fu, Qian Qianyi surrendered to the Qing.¹⁴ Though he soon retired, expressed nostalgia for the fallen Ming in writings, and even supported underground anti-Qing resistance,¹⁵ his brief service for the Qing won him the stigma of “twice-serving official” 貳臣. Similarly, Wu Weiye was forced to serve the Qing briefly in the 1650s. He felt great guilt and anguish for the experience all his life. At the end of his life, he wrote, “Suspending my death, I have lived in dishonor for more than twenty years. /How can I clear up my sins now?” 忍死偷生廿載餘,而今罪孽怎消除?¹⁶ Had Gu Yanwu read Wu Meicun’s remorse, Gu might have thought that Wu’s words served to gloss over his fault. Gu Yanwu’s idea of writing requires that words should be consistent with deeds. He detests those “who wrote the Song of Plucking Vetch¹⁷ in the morning,

¹³ *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, vol. 1, p. 321.

¹⁴ See Kang-I Sun Chang, “Qian Qianyi and His Place in History,” in *Trauma and Transcendence in Early Qing Literature*, pp. 199-201.

¹⁵ Chen Yinke 陳寅恪, *Liu Rushi biezhuàn* 柳如是別傳, chapter 5.

¹⁶ *Wu Meicun quanji* 吳梅村全集, 20. 531.

¹⁷ Two ancient recluses, Boyi and Shuqi, sing the Song of Plucking Vetch to express their loyalty to the Yin Dynasty. See *Shiji*, vol. 61.

but were exhilarated to receive the imperial call at night.” Following the same logic, he must find it difficult to tolerate those who had submitted to the Qing but repented their early decision. In Gu’s view, the majority of people are fickle.

Huang Zongxi believes that only a few remnant subjects possess moral integrity which he calls the “primal air” 元氣 or the “Yang air” 陽氣. “The primal air does not lie in the masses but in solitary individuals. It does not lie in those who enjoy bustling excitement and prosperity, but in those who endure silence and solitude” 元氣不寄於眾而寄於獨，不寄於繁華而寄於岑寂.¹⁸ Here *du* 獨 has double meanings: minority and solitude. According to Huang Zongxi, moral power is in the hand of a small number of marginalized people who can endure to live in solitude and use solitude as a moral gesture to refuse the lure of sociopolitical benefits offered by the Qing court.¹⁹

Huang Zongxi’s term the “primal air” or the “Yang air” means both the moral quality that defines the remnant subjects and their writings and the sociopolitical impact their writings evoke. Huang Zongxi believes that Huang Zonghui’s writings represent the “Yang air” that has the power to fight the “Yin air”, the evil force of the illegitimate regime. The fight between the two parties is described to be like thunder and storm. “When the Yang air is below, confined by the Yin air, the clash between the Yang air and Yin air gives birth to thunder. When the Yin air is below, shrouded by the Yang air, they roll around to be storm” 陽氣在下，重陰錮之，則擊而為雷；陰氣在下，重陽包之，則搏而成風. Huang Zongxi’s speech suggests that the “Yang air”

¹⁸ Huang Zongxi, “Inscriptions on Lü Shengqian’s Poetry Collection” 呂勝千詩集題辭, in *Huang Lizhou wenji*, p. 368.

¹⁹ Zhao Yuan 趙園 has discussed the cultural phenomenon of solitude in the early Qing, focusing on Wang Fuzhi’s 王夫之 phrase “I would rather depend on myself than depend on the masses” 用眾不如用獨, see *Ming Qing zhiji shidafu yanjiu* 明清之際士大夫研究 (北京: 北京大學出版社, 1999), p. 57-72.

embodied by the remnant subjects is suppressed by the Qing government, hence the “Yang air” below the “Yin air.” He compares the “Yang air” in this weak state to the fragile ashes of reed membranes that are put in the pitch pipes to decide the arrival of seasons. Ancient Chinese calendar uses twelve pitch pipes and the ashes of reed membranes that are put in them to decide the arrival of twelve months. It is said that when the “air” of each month arrives, the ashes of reed membranes inside the corresponding pitch pipe will fly out of it, thus predicting the arrival of the month.²⁰ Like the ashes inside the pitch pipes, the “Yang air” seems invisible and of no importance, but it has a latent power that predicts the upcoming change. Once the right time comes, Huang Zongxi suggests, the “Yang air” embodied by the remnant subjects will be released from the confinement, triggering a fight between the virtuous and evil, and changing the world with frightening power.

Huang Zongxi’s idea of moral power embodied by a few solitary individuals is rooted in the early Qing historical context. It also has its intellectual origin in 17th century Confucianism. Huang Zongxi once concludes the core of his teacher Liu Zongzhou’s 劉宗周 (1578-1645) teaching as watchful solitude 慎獨. Liu Zongzhou was one of the leading Confucian thinkers of the late Ming, who committed suicide by fasting for twenty-one days, when Nanjing, where the Southern Ming government was located after the fall of Beijing to the invading Manchus, fell in turn, thus confirming his teaching of Confucian moral principles in his personal choice. Huang Zongxi explains watchful solitude in this way:

Scholars need to confirm the substance of their nature clearly and guard it all the time, and they would achieve the watchful state. The skill of being watchful lies in having control. The master of our consciousness is our intentions (*yi*). If we are one step away from the root of our intentions, we are false, and we no longer have solitude.

²⁰ Fan Ye, *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, vol. 91, p. 1236.

學者但證得性體分明，而以時保之，即是慎矣。慎之工夫，只在主宰上，覺有主，是曰意，離意根一步，便是妄，便非獨矣。²¹

Solitude is a parameter of morality in that the intention 意, which is in charge of consciousness, must be in a state of solitude. Liu Zongzhou himself explains the meaning of watchful solitude in many ways. The following quote by Liu Zongzhou indicates that the knowledge of good and evil is intrinsic in the intention. In other words, the intention directs moral judgment.

The discussion of the mind in *The Great Learning* is that the mind has anger, fear, happiness, and anxiety. These are original substance of the mind. The discussion of the intentions in the *Great Learning* is that the intentions like good looks and dislike bad smells. Like and dislike are the original omens of the mind, and it is from like and dislike that anger, fear, happiness, and anxiety come from. Therefore intentions are intrinsic in the mind, rather than the revelation of the mind. The *Great Learning* also points out that the original omen of intentions is innate knowledge that makes a distinction between good and evil. This is why intentions cannot be fooled. Therefore innate knowledge is hidden in intentions, rather than rising from intentions. The *Great Learning* further points out that the original omen of innate knowledge is the thing that is created (by the Way) and is given form (investigated by the mind). This is called solitude.

大學之言心也，曰忿懣、恐懼、好樂、憂患而已。此四者，心之體也。其言意也，則曰好好色，惡惡臭。好惡者，此心最初之機，即四者之所自來，故意蘊於心，非心之所發也。又就意中指出最初之機，則僅有知善知惡之知而已，此即意之不可欺者也。故知藏於意，非意之所起也。又就知中指出最初之機，則僅有體物不遺之物而已，此所謂獨也。²²

The reason that Liu Zongzhou and his disciple Huang Zongxi emphasize the moral capacity of the intention is that they are aware of the harmful consequence of Wang Yangming' 王陽明 (1472-1529) famous instruction at the Tianquan Bridge and intend to make a moralistic revision of it. Wang Yangming's instruction is:

In the original substance of the mind there is no distinction of good and evil.

When the intentions become active, however, such a distinction exists.

The function of innate knowledge is to know good and evil.

The investigation of things is to do good and remove evil.

無善無惡心之體，有善有惡意之動，知善知惡是良知，為善去惡是格物。²³

²¹ Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲, *Mingru xuean* 明儒學案 (北京: 中華書局, 1985), vol. 62 戴山學案, p. 1514.

²² 明儒學案, vol. 62, p. 1519.

²³ "The Colloquy at the Tianquan Bridge" 天泉證道記, translation is from *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. 1, p. 850.

This instruction tends to polarize the school of Wang Yangming, with one wing emphasizing the importance of moral cultivation and the other, intuitive spontaneity. The latter believes that the innate substance of the mind transcends good and evil and that natural spontaneity rather than conscious moral effort is the characteristic of the sage.²⁴ Liu Zongzhou and Huang Zongxi repudiate the second interpretation of Wang Yangming's instruction, which they believe is under the influence of Chan Buddhism and immune from moral responsibility. Liu Zongzhou avoids the distinction of the intention from innate knowledge in Wang Yangming's teaching, confirming that the intention as well as the mind, being directed by innate knowledge, is capable of making moral choice. By saying that "the original omen of innate knowledge is the thing investigated by the mind, and this is called solitude," he attributes the ultimate origin of morality to solitude. Solitude is the basis and substance of the thing, innate knowledge, intentions and the mind. Therefore, "If we are one step from solitude, we are insincere" 離獨一步，便是人偽; "There is no such thing as the loss of the mind. Once we leave the state of solitude, the mind is lost" 心無存亡，但離獨位便是亡.²⁵ Huang Zongxi's statements that the intentions are the master of human consciousness and that the practice of being solitude resides in the intentions follow the same logic. To recapitulate: morality is realized in the state of solitude.

Discourse on Solitude in Late-Ming Writings

Huang Zongxi's description of the "narrow-minded/solitary man" turns "narrow-minded" from a pejorative term to praise and therefore reverses the traditional value system. His idea inherits the late Ming literary discourse on literati's proud isolation that is often disguised as self-

²⁴ *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, p. 850.

²⁵ 明儒學案, vol. 62, pp. 1521 and 1527.

deprecation. In his “Preface to the Erotic and the Strange Stories” 豔異編序, Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖 (1550-1616) claimed to be an ignorant man 曲士 struck by the strangeness of the stories of anomalies, who was different from the open-minded men 達人 whose broad knowledge inhibited them from appreciating unusual things. The open-minded men’s dislike of unusual things echoes Confucian teaching of not talking about wonders, acts of force, disorder, or the gods. By claiming to be an ignorant person indulgent of the stories of wonders and the gods, Tang Xianzu distanced himself from the orthodox Confucianism. He predicted and dismissed Confucian scholars’ disapproval of his standpoint, “The whole generation disagrees with me, I in turn consider myself to surpass the whole generation” 一世不可余, 余亦不可一世.²⁶

The stories of anomalies Tang Xianzu advocated include drama and fiction, genres that had gained more and more popularity in the late Ming, characteristic of unrestrained imagination and elaborations of fictional events. The period witnessed the development of such popular genres as drama, fiction, and miscellaneous story challenging the authority of poetry and essay. Tang Xianzu’s contempt for the orthodox Confucians, who devoted themselves to the more respectable genres such as poetry and essay, indicated a shift of attention to the new genres among the most talented late Ming literati. So many practitioners had got their fingers into the writing of poetry and essay that the prestige of these respectable genres became shaky in the late Ming. Feng Menglong 馮夢龍 (1574-1646) sharply pointed to this situation in his “Preface to the Rule of Drama” 曲律序: “Poetry and essay have been overflowing in the recent times. Practitioners of these genres don’t have nature close to them, nor are they barely learned. Their writings are like dogs barking and donkeys neighing. They would even be ridiculed by the stone

²⁶ *Tang Xianzu quanji* 湯顯祖全集, ed. Xu Shuofang 徐朔方 (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1998), vol. 50.

on the cold mountain²⁷. They are sickly garrulous, making delirious ravings, and competing with each other to put their writings to the case of the sea of bitterness²⁸. However, not many people have got their fingers into writing drama. Isn't it because that they take drama as a minor thing and do not bother to write it, and therefore its holes are not bored²⁹ and it luckily escapes them?" 近代之最濫者, 詩文是已. 性不必近, 學未有窺, 犬吠驢鳴, 貽笑寒山之石, 病譫夢囈, 爭投苦海之箱. 獨詞曲一途, 竄足者少, 豈非以道疑小而不爭, 竅未鑿而倖免乎?³⁰ In a fable from *Zhuangzi* 莊子, it is said that the sovereign of the center of the world, the Primal Whole 渾沌, died after his two friends bored seven holes in his body with good intentions of making him the same as men who have seven holes for seeing, hearing, eating and breathing. Like the Primal Whole, poetry and essay died in the hands of incompetent writers who ruined the natural beauty of these genres, but drama and fiction survived because the lesser minds imprisoned by the orthodox Confucian teachings had not been able to realize their importance. Obviously drama and fiction became the fields left for the open-minded and talented literati, but the stigma of unorthodoxy lingered. It must be under this context that the writers such as Tang Xianzu, who ventured into the popular genres and foresaw the orthodoxy literati's scorn of his endeavor, acclaimed the value of his works through a mask of self-deprecation.

It is not a coincidence that the discourse on solitude also appeared among the literati primarily working on poetry and essay, two genres filled with imitators. The poetic arena was so crowded that the talented literati either refused to participate in it, or denied its convention while

²⁷ Tang dynasty poet Cold Mountain *Hanshan* 寒山 was famous for being colloquial.

²⁸ The case of the sea of bitterness refers to the case that contains banal writings. Wang Dingbao 王定保, *Tangzhiyan* 唐摭言, vol. 12.

²⁹ This is an allusion to a fable in *Zhuangzi* 莊子, vol.7, "Fit for Emperors and Kings" 應帝王.

³⁰ Cai Jingkan 蔡景康, *Mingdai wenlunxuan* 明代文論選 (Beijing: renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1993), p.368.

participating in it. A poet's acclaimed solitude, therefore, was both a literary and social gesture. For Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568-1610), the second and the most influential of the Yuan brothers, who held the banner of the Gongan School of poetry, a real poet's solitude was associated with playfulness, an attitude of looking down upon poetic orthodoxy and poking fun of it. He criticized poetic orthodoxy as the vulgar custom 流俗, something shared and followed by the majority, and encouraged his literary friends to have the eye beyond the world, instead of being immersed in it.³¹ The vulgar custom refers to the phenomenon of literary imitation that had been popular since the antiquarians' call for restoring ancient literary models in the Hongzhi reign (1488-1505) and Zhengde reign (1506-1521). In his "Preface to Mr. Zhonglang's Complete Collection" 中郎先生全集序, Yuan Hongdao's younger brother Yuan Zhongdao 袁中道 (1570-1623), illustrated that playfulness was Yuan Hongdao's way of subverting the constraint of the vulgar custom and of being indifferent to the judgment of the world.

His poetry and essay such as "Brocade Sail" and "Disengagement" aimed to destroy constraints, therefore there are occasionally playful phrases. It is also because he was so talented that he was brave enough to overlook the judgment of the world and to simply say what was on his mind.

先生詩文如錦帆、解脫，意在破人之執縛，故時有遊戲語，亦其才高膽大，無心于世之毀譽，聊以抒其意所欲言而。³²

Also, Yuan Zhongdao pointed out that the real literati such as Yuan Hongdao were not entangled in the world 不受世之纏糾 and that they were stubborn, free, and alone, refusing to engage with the ordinary 韻頗于世，獨往獨來，不與俗為俯仰. Etymologically the term *xiehang* 韻頗 describes the way in which birds fly up and down, and from its basic meaning are three extended meanings, "equally matched or antagonism," "erratic phrases," and "stubbornness."

³¹ "Reply to Li Yuanshan" 答李元善, *Mingdai wenlunxuan*, p. 330.

³² *Mingdai wenlunxuan*, p. 341.

Given the fact that one meaning of *xiehang* is erratic phrases, Yuan Hongdao's stubbornness suggests a capricious deviation from the normal way of writing. This is why *xiehang* is followed by "free and alone" (*dulaiduwang* 獨往獨來) in Yuan Zhongdao's description, a term implying that the real literati such as Yuan Hongdao are independent of what the majority take as the normal. Yuan Hongdao's way of deviating from the normal way of writing is to use playful, erratic phrases that defy the convention of poetry. This echoes the image of Dongfang Shuo 東方朔 (154-93 BC), the Western Han official known for his bizarre jokes to admonish the emperor. Xiahou Zhan's 夏侯湛 (243?-291?) "Verse on Dongfang Shuo's Portrait" 東方朔畫贊 explains Dongfang Shuo's playful way of dealing with the world as follows.

The righteous way could not be used; therefore he looked down upon the world by erratic phrases. If one looked down upon the world, he could not leave useful lessons; therefore he displayed his moral principles by candidly admonishing the emperor. If one had moral principles, he could not live in safety forever; therefore he pleased others by being funny.
苟出不可以直道也，故頽頽以傲世；傲世不可以垂訓也，故正諫以明節；明節不可以久安也，故談諧以取容。³³

Just as Dongfang Shuo whose bizarre jokes won himself a reputation of the court jester was different from serious scholar-officials, so Yuan Hongdao, by infusing unconventional playfulness to poetry, differentiated himself from his contemporary poets. Dongfang Shuo and Yuan Hongdao adopted the same principle of inconsistency. It was an expedient way of survival in the court for Dongfang Shuo, whereas a way of avoiding followers' banal imitation for Yuan Hongdao. In either case, inconsistency indicates nonconformity.

Yuan Hongdao innovated on the orthodox poetry in terms of playfulness, but his imitators soon picked up his innovation and ruined it. Yuan Zhongdao ridiculed that they imitated Yuan Hongdao only to turn his innovative poetry that was like fresh spring water to poor copies which reminded people of water flowing from manure soil. As the imitators lost themselves in imitation,

³³ "Verse on Dongfang Shuo's Portrait" 東方朔畫贊, *Wenxuan* 文選, vol. 47.

Yuan Hongdao had already got rid of his former writing style and moved forward.³⁴ Tan Yuanchun 譚元春 (1586-1631), one of the founders of the Jingling School of poetry, addressed this point in his “Preface to the Sequel to Mr. Yuan Zhonglang’s Collection” 袁中郎先生續集序.

Real literati from the ancient to the present are always confident, but they always regret their faults. When everyone learns the same thing as if all the rivers were pouring out simultaneously, one must have his own opinion. Even the most powerful judgment and the most eloquent speech cannot persuade him to change his mind. When everyone follows him, he goes forward. When everyone competes to imitate his writing and circulate his writing, the real literatus examines his writing in terms of his natural intelligence, and begins to regret what he has done...

古今真文人何處不自信，亦何嘗不自悔。當眾波同瀉，萬家一習之時，而我獨有所見，雖雄裁辨口，搖之不能奪其所信。至於眾為我轉，我更覺進，舉世方競寫喧傳，而真文人靈機自檢，已遁之悔中矣.....

For Yuan Hongdao, to be great meant to be misunderstood, because his followers never understood his principle of inconsistency and therefore were always one step late. In Tan Yuanchun’s portrayal, Yuan Hongdao was a reflective mind, who first defied the poetic convention, and then transcended his own defiance. His confidence of writing lay in having the courage to regret what he had done. Yuan Hongdao’s regret was a reflection of his intellectual power of being ahead of his time, and an eternal refusal of being accompanied by the mediocre majority.

If Yuan Hongdao’s playfulness and inconsistency was one way of showing superiority to mediocre poets, reclusion and aloofness was the other, and this was the way adopted by two leaders of the Jingling School of poetry, Zhong Xing 鐘惺 (1574-1624) and Tan Yuanchun. In his “Preface to Destination of Poetry” 詩歸序, Zhong Xing claimed to “go alone and wander in the darkness beyond the world” 獨往冥游于寥廓之外. He described Tan Yuanchun as having

³⁴ Yuan Zhongdao 袁中道, “Preface to Mr. Zhonglang’s Complete Collection” 中郎先生全集序, *Mingdai wenlunxuan*, p. 341.

lonely and outstanding mind and intentions 居心托意, 本自孤迥.³⁵ In Zhong Xing's "Preface to the Pavilion of Asking the Mountain" 問山亭詩序, he claimed that things were valued when they were alone 物有孤而為奇. Being alone was a value, because being alone suggested being unique. A poet was like a plant. A solitary poet, like a rare plant, won himself fame by the fact that he barely appeared in front of the mortal eyes of the public. The idea of seclusion is even suggested in the name of Tan Yuanchun's studio, "Simple and Distant" 簡遠. For Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun, a poet was not forced to withdraw from society because of sociopolitical frustration (though Zhong Xing indeed was forced to leave the political arena as a victim of political factions), but took solitude as a self-imposed standpoint and a precondition of becoming a great poet.

The Jingling School's idea of the solitary poet in the contemporary world was in conjunction with their desire to befriend ancient poets and to discover their true spirit. Their desire to search for the true spirit of ancient poets is exemplified in the project of compiling two popular anthologies of classical poetry, *Destination of Classical Poetry* 古詩歸 and *Destination of Tang Poetry* 唐詩歸. Tan Yuanchun's "Preface to Destination of Poetry" 詩歸序 vividly describes his intense emotional engagement with ancient poets.

The words that really flow from one's natural intelligence often stand out on paper, never being in company with other words. The writer who has his own eye focuses his strength and concentrates his thoughts in order to emulate the ancients, and he feels that the ancients, with their bright pupils, gaze back at him from paper. ... If a writer entertains a solitary mind and a solitary goal, he will definitely have his name last alone from the ancient to the present, and will refuse to have his name spread in the emptiness. There is only one or two readers, who appreciate his writing, admire and feel lost for his writing. His writing is like the beacon fire on an empty valley. Smokes of the beacon fire curl upwards like a thread swaying in the wind, sometimes dispersed, sometimes collected, sometimes broken, and sometimes connected.

³⁵ Zhong Xing, "Preface to Poetry of the Studio of Humble and Distant Hall" 簡遠堂詩序, *Mingdai wenlunxuan*, p. 357.

When the wind stops and the smokes are connected, the smokes can blur the moon and stars, and be blown to the far distance.

夫真有性靈之言，常浮出紙上，決不與眾言伍。而自出眼光之人，專其力，壹其思，以達于古人；覺古人亦有炯炯雙眸從紙上還矚人，……夫人有孤懷，有孤詣，其名必孤行于古今之間，不肯遍滿寥廓。而世有一二賞心之人，獨為之咨嗟彷徨者，… 譬如狼煙之上虛谷，裊裊然一綫耳，風搖之，時散、時聚、時斷、時續。而風定煙接之時，卒以此亂星月而吹四遠。

This is a manifesto of poetic solitude. In Tan Yuanchun's view, both the ingenious ancient poet and late Ming poet were solitary. Similarly, their ingenious words stood out, unrivaled by other words. The immediate communication between the poets from the past and present was achieved in a mutual gaze. The late Ming poet, in his private study, focused his thoughts on the words written by the ancient poet, whereas the ancient poet returned his gaze from the paper, and mutual recognition was like lightning shining through the darkness around the late Ming poet. The solitary poet was satisfied to have a single moment of mutual recognition. His influence was like a thread of smoke swaying in the wind, willing to be ignored by the whole world except a few empathetic minds. When the time of mutual recognition came, his far-reaching influence would overshadow the light of celestial bodies. What is most impressive of Tan Yuanchun's description of mutual recognition between the ancient and late Ming poets is his imagination of a flash of light set against the vast darkness. The darkness signifies the world solitary poets refuse to be mixed with, whereas the moment of light signifies that solitary poets across time find great illumination in each other.

Qian Qianyi, the most learned and influential poet and scholar during the late Ming and early Qing, recapitulated the idea of the solitary poet by describing the conflict between real poets and their mediocre contemporaries.

What is admired by ordinary people is laughed at by poets. Ordinary people scold those who live in sad destitution but are still sharp, capricious, arrogant, and eccentric; however, poets praise them. What is sought by ordinary people is shunned by poets. What is loathed by

ordinary people is loved by poets. Poets are anxious when praised by ordinary people. Poets are happy when ordinary people are angered by their writing.

世俗之所嘆羨也，而詩人以為笑；凌厲荒忽，敖僻清狂，悲憂窮蹇，世俗之所詬姍也，而詩人以為美。人之所趨，詩人之所畏；人之所憎，詩人之所愛。人譽而詩人以為憂，人怒而詩人以為喜。³⁶

The quote is from Qian Qianyi's preface to his disciple Feng Ban's 馮班 (1602-1671) poetry collection, written right before the fall of the Ming Dynasty. It reveals the fact that real poets cannot get along with the world. It is predictable to hear one say that poets are different from or superior to most people, but saying that poets oppose to most people in all the feelings and judgments indicates the great tension between them, the incompatible value systems beheld by the two sides, disillusionment of the poets with the world, and their deliberate estrangement from the world.

As analyzed above, the discourse on solitude in late-Ming writings shows two directions. On the one hand, a group of adventurous late-Ming literati who devoted themselves to popular genres such as drama and fiction claimed to be solitary, because the orthodox Confucianism that disdained popular genres still prevailed among the literati. On the other hand, disappointed by banal imitation in poetry, the leading poets of the period took poetic solitude as a rhetorical strategy to distinguish themselves from the mediocre majority. The Gongan School and the Jingling School were spokesmen of this trend. Yuan Hongdao distinguished himself by using playful and erratic phrases in poetry. His innovation on poetry by infusing playfulness into it echoed the popularity of drama and fiction, because playfulness was an indispensable feature of plays and fictions of this period. The poetic solitude of Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun involved their withdrawal from society and their attempt to befriend the ancient poets instead of their contemporaries. Solitude was both a trait of their character and the style of their poetry. As we

³⁶ *Muzhai chuxueji* 牧齋初學集, vol. 32, in *Qian Muzhai quanji* 錢牧齋全集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2003), vol. 2, p. 939.

will see later in the paper, two directions of the discourse on solitude have great influence on the discourse on solitude in early-Qing writings, as well as the construction of lyrical self and theatrical self by the early-Qing literati.

Moral Emotionalism

I want to return to the discourse on solitude of the early-Qing remnant subjects. To be different and detached from the majority was primarily a literary choice for the late Ming literati, but for Huang Zongxi and Gu Yanwu, solitude has moral significance. In either case, we see the challenge against the orthodox Confucianism, the conflict between solitary writers and the dominant value system, and the belief that literary, aesthetic, and moral superiority belonged to the minority. Solitude suggests a negative relation with the political power. It also indicates a turn of introspection and an attempt of soul searching. In this sense, the remnant subjects who chose to be literarily and morally solitary represent the counterculture.

Just as the “solitary man” is not an admirable model required by the Chinese literary tradition, the style of his writing is at odds with the Confucian ideal that poetry should be happy but not too extreme, lamentable but not sad 樂而不淫, 哀而不傷.³⁷ Huang Zongxi indicates that Huang Zonghui’s writing features extreme sadness which is against the Confucian teaching of balanced and controlled poetic feelings.

Zewang’s poetry and essay are lofty, severe, far-reaching, and pure. Take the mountain analogy, it would be a sheer cliff and a valley occupied by ghosts. Take the sound analogy, it would be the cry of gibbons and a stork coughing and laughing like an old man.³⁸ Take the

³⁷ *Analects* 論語, 3. 20.

³⁸ This is an allusion to Su Shi’s 蘇軾 “Account of Stone Bell Mountain” 石鐘山記. “A falcon roosting on the mountain, hearing the sound of human voices, rose up suddenly in alarm, screeching in the clouds. There was also something like an old man coughing and laughing in the mountain valley” 而山上棲鵲, 聞人聲亦驚起, 磔磔雲霄間, 又有若老人咳且笑于山谷中者, 或曰此鸛鶴也.

water analogy, it would be a waterfall splashing on scattered rocks. Take the ground analogy, it would be a battlefield covered with broken tumbleweeds and withered grasses, and a desolate palace on a wasteland where solitary owls cry. Take the music analogy, it would be the mutated *zhi*³⁹ note and broken strings.

澤望之為詩文，高厲遐清，其在於山，則鐵壁鬼谷也；其在於水，則瀑布亂礁也；其在於聲，則猿吟而鶴鶴歛且笑也；其在平原曠野，則蓬斷草枯之戰場，孤鳴鴟嘯之蕪城荒殿也；其在於樂，則變徵而絕絃也。⁴⁰

The music analogy Huang Zongxi uses to describe Huang Zonghui's writing illuminates the political implications of poetic sadness. Music and politics are always associated in Confucian interpretation of music and poetry. Ancient Chinese pentatonic scale has five notes, *gong* 宮, *shang* 商, *jue* 角, *zhi* 徵, and *yu* 羽, plus two half notes mutated *zhi* 變徵, and mutated *gong* 變宮. Mutated is set against proper (*zheng* 正). If *zheng* describes the stability of a government and society functioning properly, a stability that is manifest in the tone of the poems and music of that age, mutated represents a devolution, in which the growing imbalances in society manifest themselves in poetry and music. The "Great Preface" to the *Classic of Poetry* asks readers to read the mutated not simply as manifestations of moral decline, but rather as responses by virtuous men to the problem of moral decline.⁴¹ By making an analogy between Huang Zonghui's writing and the mutated *zhi*, the note evoking sadness, Huang Zongxi suggests the political turbulence of the early Qing and Huang Zonghui's response to it in writing. The expressive images Huang Zongxi uses to describe Huang Zonghui's writing style, the desolate landscape, mysterious sounds made by animals, battlefields, and ruins, imply the political turmoil of the early Qing and the writer's despair and indignation. "The tones of an age of turmoil are bitter and full of anger; its government is perverse. The tones of a ruined state are

³⁹ Ancient Chinese pentatonic scale has five notes, *gong*, *shang*, *jiao*, *zhi*, *yu*, plus two changing notes, mutated *zhi* *bianzhi* and mutated *gong* *biangong*.

⁴⁰ Huang *Lizhou wenji*, p. 336.

⁴¹ See Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 47.

filled with lament and brooding; its people are in difficulty” 亂世之音怨以怒，其政乖。亡國之音哀以思，其民困。⁴² The quote from the “Great Preface” to the *Classic of Poetry* summarizes the underlying political message in Huang Zonghui’s writing.

The idea that best literary works are created when dissatisfied writers pour out their frustration and anguish in the writings has a long history in Chinese literature. Qu Yuan stood at the beginning of the genealogy of frustrated writers. Sima Qian offered a terse formulation for this mode of psychology in his “Letter in Response to Ren Shaoqing” 報任少卿書. “Most of the three hundred poems of the *Classic of Poetry* were written when the sages poured forth their anger and dissatisfaction. All these men had a rankling in their hearts, for they were not able to accomplish what they wished. Therefore they wrote of past affairs in order to pass on their thoughts to future generations.”⁴³ 詩三百篇，大抵聖賢發憤之所為作也。此人皆意有所郁結，不得通其道，故述往事，思來者。 The formulation emphasizes the tension between the sages and the world that wronged them, underestimated their talents, and stopped them from fulfilling their aspirations. Underlying it is a social criticism toward the political authority that controlled the fate of the lettered men. Admittedly, not all the exponents of this association of frustration and literature had political message in mind. Confucius said that the *Classic of Poetry* could be used to express resentment 怨⁴⁴, but in his view resentment is a generic term, not necessarily linked to political dissatisfaction. Zhong Rong 鐘嶸 (ca.468-518), the literary critic in the Six Dynasties, discussed the poetic expression of resentment primarily from a literary perspective in his “Preface to Gradations of Poets” 詩品序. He said that lonely people, such as those on exile or war and those who lost the beloved ones, got comfort and relief by expressing their resentment in

⁴² The “Great Preface” to the *Classic of Poetry*. Translation is from *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 43.

⁴³ *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, volume 1, p. 372.

⁴⁴ *Analects*, 17.9.

poetry, which, in this context, was interchangeable with sorrow. Literary critics from the later ages often emphasized the evocative power of poetic resentment/sadness, making new formulations that poems of frustration were naturally superior to those of happiness. Their discovery that sad poems were more appealing than happy ones stimulated poets into writing poems about sadness regardless of their real feelings. Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824), in his preface to the the *Jingtān Exchange Collection* 荆潭唱和詩, a collection of a number of powerful officials' poems, ridiculed these socially privileged poets writing sad poems simply for the appealing effect of sad words. "The tone of placidity is plain, whereas the sound of lament is subtle; it is difficult to have a fine speech of happiness, whereas it is easy to write good works of sadness." 和平之音淡薄, 而愁思之聲要妙。歡愉之辭難工, 而窮苦之言易好.⁴⁵ Literary critics were troubled by the dissociation of sad words and sad feelings and desired to rebuild the link. Their idea is that only poets in destitution can write poems that convey sincere sadness, and the more destitute is their life, the better is their poetry. The pent-up sadness and anger inside the poets would give birth to social criticism that defines great poetry. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1073), the poet and scholar of the Northern Song, summarized the idea in the pithy axiom: "A poet must be destitute to write great poetry" 窮者而後工.⁴⁶

Sadness, sorrow, resentment, and anger are all intense emotions from the perspective of Confucian poetics. Though they are not denied in poetry, and in many cases they are the essence of great poems, the existence of these emotions in poetry is contingent on appropriate occasions, and writers and readers are often required to achieve catharsis through writing and reading poems with intense emotions. As Zhong Rong put it in the "Preface to Gradations of Poets," the

⁴⁵ *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文, vol. 555, p. 5629.

⁴⁶ "Preface to Mei Shengyu's Poetry Collection" 梅聖俞詩集序.

poems of resentment can “make those in destitution at ease and those in isolation get rid of lament” 使窮賤易安，幽居靡悶。⁴⁷ The ultimate goal of writing and reading poetry is to achieve ease and happiness. Poetry that does not seek to comfort readers but instead provokes pain, anger, and sorrow needs justification. Political turmoil is one occasion that justifies these negative feelings that otherwise should be avoided. The debate on the poems by Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun in the early Qing exemplifies the appropriate relationship between politics and extreme literary expressions required by the Confucian poetics. Qian Qianyi harshly criticizes their poems that feature the sad sound and chill spirit 淒聲寒魄, saying that they remind readers of ghosts.⁴⁸ The accusation is that the sad and apparitional atmosphere of their poems prophesied and even obliquely led to the decline of the Ming dynasty. On the other hand, the critics who desire to redeem the poems by Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun claim that their poems appropriately responded to the decline of the Ming dynasty and thus represented the virtue of the poets. Zhu Heling 朱鶴齡 (1606-1683), a scholar of classics and poetry who lived in seclusion in the early Qing, in his preface to the *Collection of Cold Mountains* 寒山集, a collection of poems from the Tianqi 天啟 reign (1621-1627), Chongzhen 崇禎 reign (1628-1644) and onward, justifies the sad and desolate poems of Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun.

The world despised the style of the poems of Zhong Xing and Tan Yuanchun, saying that they represented the taste of ghosts, the symbol of wars, and the tone of the declining state. ... Their poems are actually what is said to be the Yu note. ... It is said in “Yueji” that the sound of strings is sad so as to establish the upright nature.⁴⁹ ... When the Yu mode is played on strings, the sound is undulating and subtle, lacking placidity. This is the so-called “tenuous and rapid” sound in “Yueji”.⁵⁰ ... However, this is not the fault of musicians and poets.

⁴⁷ Cao Xu 曹旭, ed. *Shipin jizhu* 詩品集注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1994), p. 47.

⁴⁸ *Liechao shiji xiaozhuan* 列朝詩集小傳, p. 570.

⁴⁹ “Yueji” 乐记, in *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999), vol.39.

⁵⁰ “Yueji” 乐记, in *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義, vol.38.

Sounds and tones communicate with the fate of the state, and stir individuating nature and emotion. ... These gentlemen (Zhong and Tan) lived in an age that lacked restraint, and they experienced the devastation of the war. Therefore they were grieved by everything they encountered. They had pure mind, and were provoked to have intense feelings in the poems. It is appropriate that their poems are resentful, angry, lamentable, and sad.

乃世所嗤鐘、譚體，為鬼趣，為兵徵，亡國之音也.....此樂所謂羽聲者也。.....傳曰：“絲聲哀，哀以立廉。”.....以絲聲操羽調，則沈伏幼眇，失其和平，此樂記所謂“志微噍殺”之音。.....然此非人之過也。聲音之理通乎世運，感乎性情。.....諸君子生濡首之時，值焚巢之遇，則觸物而含悽，懷清而激響，怨而怒，哀而傷，固其宜也。⁵¹

Zhu Heling compares the poems of Zhong and Tan to sad music, and admits that their poems lack peace and placidity valued by the Confucian tradition. However, following the logic in the “Great Preface” to the *Classic of Poetry*, Zhu Heling points out that the redemption of these poems lies in the fact that they did not trigger the dynastic decline but instead responded to it and the response reflected their moral integrity. In other words, the sad and desolate style of their poems is not simply a literary choice, but a moral choice to the political turmoil of the late Ming.

Zhu Heling’s reading of the poetry of the Jingling School and Huang Zongxi’s interpretation of Huang Zonghui’s poetry reveal the connection between the Jingling School and the remnant subjects. Both the Jingling School and the remnant subjects identify real poets with solitary individuals and advocate the sad and desolate style of poetry. The poems of the Jingling School and the remnant subjects rebuild the link between pent-up sadness and sad words that was lost in the poet’s opportunistic use of sad words. The expression of unchecked emotions in their poems is justified, because it appropriately responds to the political and moral decline of the time. Following the same logic, the remnant subjects justify their own poems that convey sadness, dissatisfaction, despair, and anger, and therefore are at odds with the Confucian tradition. The time is unusual, so is its poetry. The remnant subjects thus redefine the orthodox Confucian poetics of gentleness and restraint, indicating that the poems with extreme or even violent

⁵¹ *Qingdai wenlunxuan*, pp. 59-60.

emotions have moral power unfound in the poems that comply with the teaching of gentleness and restraint. Still, Huang Zongxi is the most eloquent spokesman of this idea.

Nowadays everyone's discussion of poetry is based on individuating nature and emotion. However, one's individuating nature cannot be brought out unless it is smelted until impurities are removed. They think that the Confucian teaching of gentleness and restraint means that poetry should be complacent and frail and silence the feelings on the poet's mind, so they keep on writing poems that are like sick men. If we follow their idea, among the growth (spring), harvest (autumn), cold (winter) and heat (summer), only the growth and harvest are gentle and kind, but the cold and heat are not; among joy, anger, sadness and happiness, only joy and happiness are gentle and kind, but anger and sadness are not. In addition, poets must be idle and unbridled, living on the mountains and looking at the lakes, occupied with nothing; their studios must be located in elegant and clean places, with tea pots, incense burners, copybooks of calligraphy and famous paintings; when we enter their studios, we must feel idle as if we were seeing the wind over the cloudy forests and oceanic mountains. It is true that when Confucius deleted poems from the *Classic of Poetry*, he preserved such pieces as "Accomplishment and Happiness" and "Inside the Mound." However, those pieces in the *Classic of Poetry* with such a lingering effect that we can never forget all fall in the category of the mutated *feng* and mutated *ya*. ... (They are) not different from the balmy wind coming from the south, nor are they different from the feeling of stepping on the ice and frozen to the marrow. The anger in them makes one feel as if seeing sudden lightning and shooting rainbow. Pent-up sadness in them grieves one. Only through this development from agitation to tranquility can they (poets and poems) be called gentle and kind. ... My friend Wan Zhenyi has experienced hardships and destitution. His will has been tempered by hardships so long that every scenery and object he encounters touches him and becomes poetry. ... Poetry is the revelation of his individuating nature and the primal air between the heaven and the earth.

今之論詩者，誰不言本於性情。顧非烹煉使銀銅鉛鐵之盡去，則性情不出。彼以為溫柔敦厚之詩教，必委蛇頽墮，有懷而不吐，將相趨於厭厭無氣力而後已。若是則四時之發斂寒暑，必發斂乃為溫柔敦厚，寒暑則飛矣；人之喜怒哀樂，必喜樂乃為溫柔敦厚，怒哀則非矣。其人之為詩者，亦必閒散放蕩，巖居川觀，無所事事而後可；亦必茗碗薰爐，法書名畫，位置雅潔，入其室者蕭然如睹雲林、海岳之風而後可。然吾觀夫子所刪，非無考槃、丘中之什厝乎其間，而諷之令人低徊而不能去者，必於變風變雅歸焉。……不異薰風之南來，履冰之中骨，怒則掣電流虹，哀則悽楚蘊結；激揚以抵和平，方可謂之溫柔敦厚也。……貞一風塵困頓，鍛煉既久，觸景感物，無一而非詩，……此性情之昭著，天地之元氣也。⁵²

In the above quoted "Preface to Wan Zhenyi's Poetry Collection" 萬貞一詩序, the most impressive part is Huang Zongxi's dialogue with the Confucian principle of gentleness and restraint. The term gentleness and restraint first appears as a descriptive word of character in the

⁵² Huang Lizhou wenji, p. 363.

Confucian classic, the *Record of Rites* 禮記, which quotes Confucius' saying that the *Classic of Poetry* teaches the people of one state to be gentle and kind 其為人也溫柔敦厚, 詩教也.⁵³ Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648), a Confucian classist of the Tang Dynasty, explained in his exegesis on the *Record of Rites* that the *Classic of Poetry* was gentle and kind because it remonstrated the superiors by tactful analogy. Thus the principle of gentleness and restraint referred to both a cultivated personality and a suave way of engaging in politics in terms of tact. In a society where smooth human relationship was the primary concern of ethical and philosophical teachings, it is no surprise that the principle of gentleness and restraint occupied a prominent position. However, Huang Zongxi notices that the emphasis on cultivating gentle and kind character through poetry makes Chinese poets reluctant to express what is on their mind and their poetry lack of forthright force. In other words, sophisticated refinement sacrifices the expressive power of poetry. Huang Zongxi's discovery of this defect of the Confucian poetics stimulates him to redefine the teaching of gentleness and restraint by expanding its implications in order to incorporate opposite elements. The teaching of gentleness and restraint naturally evokes qualities such as control, grace, and tranquility, but Huang Zongxi incorporates into it intense emotions that disquiet or provoke readers. He knows that men with common sense would prefer spring and autumn to summer and winter, and would look for happiness instead of sadness, but he wants to challenge such an inclination. His reinterpretation of the teaching of gentleness and restraint includes emotions that are not usually put under the rubric of gentleness and restraint. He summarizes his reinterpretation in a concise sentence: "Only through the development from agitation to tranquility can they (poets and poems) be called gentle and kind" 激揚以抵和平, 方可謂之溫柔敦厚也. Without opposing the basic principle of the Confucian poetics, Huang Zongxi

⁵³ *Liji zhengyi*, vol. 50, p. 1368.

rewrites it in terms of a dialectical thinking. His reinterpretation of the Confucian poetics of gentleness and restraint combines the traditional Confucian principle with its negation and thus enriches the meaning of the poetics of gentleness and restraint.

The literary model that best represents Huang Zongxi's reinterpretation of gentleness and restraint is the "mutated airs" 變風 and "mutated odes" 變雅. "Airs," "Odes," and "Hymns" are the three main divisions of the *Classic of Poetry*. The "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" refer to the pieces in the *Classic of Poetry* that are believed to be written as the virtuous poet's response to an age of moral decline. The legitimate status of the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" in the Confucian poetic tradition is predicated on the unusual political circumstances in which these pieces are written. Huang Zongxi links the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" with his reinterpretation of the Confucian principle of gentleness and restraint, saying that the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" represent real gentleness and restraint through the expression of intense emotions. He takes the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" as the ideal model of the principle of gentleness and restraint, because of the political turmoil of his own age, as well as the tension between the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" and the orthodox Confucian poetics. By adopting the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" as the ideal model, he challenges the orthodox Confucian poetics while complying with its basic principle.

Just as the early-Qing remnant subjects inherit the late-Ming discourse on solitude, so the celebration of intense emotions has its root in the late-Ming cult of passion. Huang Zongxi's description of the evocative power of the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes" is adapted from the late Ming scholar and writer Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1541-1620).

Most of the good poets in antiquity were exiled, resentful scholars and officials. They were frustrated, so they wrote poetry to reveal their pent-up emotions and express their grievance.

This tradition was established by Qu Yuan's *Lisao*. Isn't it true that poetry is not the vocation of those who are powerful and wealthy, but those who are impoverished and frustrated? Poetry is nothing but a place where people lodge their natural intelligence. If one is not deeply moved, his emotion is not deep. If his emotion is not deep, his writing cannot stir the reader's heart, nor can it be transmitted to later generations with far-reaching influence. When we examine the poems Confucius deleted from the *Classic of Poetry*, it is not that the poems that talk about high positions and good salary were not among them. However, those pieces in the *Classic of Poetry* with such a lingering effect that we can never forget all fall in the category of the mutated *feng* and mutated *ya*. From this we can know the way of writing poetry.

古之稱詩者，率羈人怨士，不得志之人，以通其鬱結，而抒其不平，蓋離騷所從來矣。豈詩非在勢處顯之事，而常與窮愁困悴者直邪？詩非他，人之性靈之所寄也。苟其感不至，則情不深，情不深，則無以驚心而動魄，垂世而行遠。吾觀尼父所刪，非無顯融膴厚者厝乎其間，而諷之令人低徊而不能去，必于變風雅歸焉，則詩道可知也。⁵⁴

Jiao Hong's discussion brings us back to the idea that the poet's frustration contributes to great poetry, but after a recapitulation of this idea, he attributes intense emotions and evocative power to the "mutated airs" and "mutated odes." This is Jiao Hong's revision of the traditional link between frustration and great poetry. Influenced by the late-Ming cult of passion, Jiao Hong believes that frustrated poets respond to suffering with deep emotions that make great poetry possible. While emotion in Jiao Hong's discussion suggests romantic feeling, Huang Zongxi uses the compound "individuating nature" (*xingqing*) to replace it in his preface to Wan Zhenyi's poetry collection, thus locating the basis of poetry in the poet's moral character. This is made more clear in Huang Zongxi's "Preface to Huang Fuxian's Poetry" 黃孚先詩序, written in 1679.

What emotion do people nowadays have? Their emotion is determined by the situation, which is further contingent on the time. Their sobs and weeps are superficial. ... However, their learned mind⁵⁵ that is formed in illusion disappears immediately. What is on their mind and represented in their sound cannot be said to be emotion. ... It is not that the poetry written by people nowadays does not come from their individuating nature; it is that they have no individuating nature from which poetry comes.

⁵⁴ "Preface to the Collection of the Studio of Elegant Entertainment" 雅娛閣集序, in *Mingdai wenlun xuan*, p. 246.

⁵⁵ Learned mind 習心 is the opposite of innate knowing 良知 in neo-Confucianism. It refers to consciousness acquired through contact with the external world.

今人亦何情之有，情隨事轉，事因世變，乾啼濕哭，總為膚受……然而習心幻結，俄頃銷亡，其發於心著於聲者，未可便謂之情也。……今人之詩非不出於性情也，以無性情之可出也。⁵⁶

Here emotion and individuating nature are interchangeable. They are both based on morality, and for Huang Zongxi morality means a faithful commitment to a cause, regardless of the change of time and place. He uses the criterion of authenticity 真 to define emotion. Individuating nature is authentic emotion that is not changed by situations.

Huang Zongxi's celebration of the straightforward expression of authentic emotion in poetry is undoubtedly linked to the time when political turmoil disquieted the scholars and literati. This is not an age for aesthetic appreciation of beauty, and consequently Huang Zongxi criticizes the traditional persona of poet, the one epitomized in many late-Ming essays and poems that depict the poet's sophisticated life style. As Huang Zongxi ridicules in his preface to Wan Zhenyi's poetry collection, the poet was said to be so idle and aloof that he had nothing to do except appreciating landscapes, and his taste was said to be so exquisite that his life was occupied with nothing but the finest forms of arts. Huang Zongxi points out that the peaceful days were gone, so was the indolent, complacent poet who enjoyed peace in arts. The early Qing remnant subjects unanimously record the cataclysmic upheaval of the age and attribute moral value to it. In his preface to Jin Jieshan's 金介山 poetry collection, Huang Zongxi writes: "Thunderbolts burned pagoda trees. Heaven and earth were frightened. Everything that was destroyed and rocked made resentful and sad sobs, occupying our ears like the sound of the wind and springs. How could Jieshan not be touched? He would write all of them in the mutated *feng*." 雷霆焚槐，天地大絃，萬物之摧拉搖盪者，蓼蓼而為窮苦愁怨之聲，不啻風泉之滿聽矣。介山能無動乎？將一一寫之以為變風。⁵⁷ That thunderbolts burned pagoda trees and heaven and earth were frightened comes from

⁵⁶ Huang Lizhou wenji, p. 343.

⁵⁷ Huang Zongxi, "Preface to Jin Jieshan's Poetry" 金介山詩序, in Huang Lizhou wenji, p. 361.

Zhuangzi. In *Zhuangzi* the turmoil in nature is analogous to one's spiritual disturbance caused by his attention and attachment to the external world. Following the analogy goes the typical Zhuangzi teaching that one should forget the concept of self and banish the attachment so as to reconcile with the world and achieve mental freedom.⁵⁸ Just as Huang Zongxi's redefinition of gentleness and restraint makes a twist of the traditional Confucian vocabulary, his appropriation of the Taoist vocabulary reverses the Taoist teaching. Rather than free from the external world, in Huang Zongxi's description the real poet sensitively feels the turmoil, eager to be agitated and stimulated to write poetry about the world that is full of the resentful, sad sobs.

Huang Zongxi's gesture of embracing the political turmoil and all the sufferings along with it comes from the belief that sufferings can refine human nature. In his preface to Wan Zhenyi's poetry collection, Huang Zongxi makes an analogy between refining one's individuating nature and smelting gold. "One's individuating nature cannot be brought out unless it is smelted until impurities are removed" 顧非烹煉使銀銅鉛鐵之盡去，則性情不出。The idea conjures up a passage from *Zhuangzi*. "So now I think of Heaven and Earth as a great furnace, and the Creator as a skilled smith. Where could he send me that would not be all right" 今一以天地為大爐，以造化為大冶，惡乎往而不可哉？⁵⁹ The *Zhuangzi* text suggests that one should be resigned to what is to come, so the pain of being smelted in a furnace is lost. However, Huang Zongxi's metaphor of smelting gold does not celebrate calm resignation to capricious fate, but instead emphasizes his belief that one's individuating nature is beneath the surface as gold is mixed with other metals or jade is hidden in a stone. Smelting/refining one's individuating nature is especially comparable

⁵⁸ Chapter 26, "Waiwu" 外物, *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋, edited by Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961), vol. 9, pp. 920-23.

⁵⁹ "Dazongshi" 大宗師, *Ibid.*, chapter 6, vol. 3, p. 262, Burton Watson's translation.

with the metaphor of polishing jade in Chinese classics. In the ancient story of the Jade disc of He, Bian He who discovered a piece of jade stone had to endure a series of pain and suffering before the precious jade inside the stone was finally revealed.⁶⁰ In Huang Zongxi's view, the political turmoil during the Ming-Qing transition constituted the crucible of adversity for the remnant subjects, who sloughed off less admirable elements of their character as impurities are removed from gold or the precious jade is taken out of a stone. In addition, the idea that one's individuating nature is hidden coincides with the fact that human existence is so limited that it needs to be broadened by unusual circumstances. Political turmoil is valuable because it releases the poet's talent from the confinement of everyday life. In his "Preface to Uncle Chen Weian's Poetry" 陳葦庵年伯詩序, Huang Zongxi writes: "Poetry must come from one's individuating nature. When one has not tasted all the bitter vicissitudes of life, his understanding of the world is limited, and his individuating nature is liable to be buried (beneath daily life). Even if poets live in the same time, those who have experienced all the vicissitudes of life and those who have not are different. Those who have experienced all the vicissitudes of life are faithful whereas those who have not are fragile." 蓋詩之為道, 從性情而出, 人之性情, 其甘苦心酸之變未盡, 則世智所限, 易容埋沒. 即所遇之時同, 而其間有盡不盡者, 不盡者終不能與盡者較其貞脆.⁶¹

Following the similar idea that political turmoil is valuable, He Yinsun 賀貽孫 (1606-?), a poet and literary critic who lived in reclusion after the fall of the Ming dynasty, claims that he is pressed to have his individuating nature by destitution during the Ming-Qing transition. "At the moment of the dynastic fall, all the calamities happened at the same time, and numerous anxieties gathered. I suffered hunger and cold, and drifted from place to place. I was pressed to

⁶⁰ The story of Jade Disc of He has many versions. The most popular version is found in *Hanfeizi* 韓非子, vol. 13.

⁶¹ *Huang Lizhou wenji*, p. 345.

have my individuating nature, and only then could I achieve profundity in my poetry.” 時值國變，三災並起，百憂咸集，飢寒流離，逼出性靈，方能自立堂奧。⁶² Du Jun 杜濬 (1611-1687), another recluse after the fall of the Ming dynasty, claims that one’s intelligence is stimulated by bitter vicissitudes of his life. “The ancient writers mostly came from privileged families. They were studious and thoughtful. They must have experienced adversity and hardships. They had misfortunes in their lives, or failed in their careers, or even suffered destitution like fluttering tumbleweeds and floating stalks. Hardships made them as tenacious as those born to humble families. Only after that could they have their intelligence stimulated and their talents refined. Then their words were worthy of being passed to later generations.” 蓋有見於古之作者，多出於大家世族之才子弟，顧其好學深思，又必嘗經挫折偃蹇，或身世抵牾，或仕宦蹉跎，甚而至於極寒困頓，飄蓬泛梗，其拂逆動忍，一如寒峻，而後有以激發其聰明，鍛煉其才格，其立言始足以為傳焉。⁶³ These speeches resonate with a famous passage from *Mencius*. “When Heaven intends to confer on a person a great responsibility it first visits his mind and will with suffering, toils his sinews and bones, subjects his body to hunger, exposes him to poverty, and confounds his projects. Through this, his mind is stimulated, his nature strengthened, and his inadequacies repaired.” 故天將降大任於是人也，必先苦其心志，勞其筋骨，餓其體膚，空乏其身，行拂亂其所為，所以動心忍性，曾益其所不能。⁶⁴ Suffering is the prophecy of future greatness. Along with the belief in the painful process of refining human nature, the *Mencius* text constitutes the fundamental Confucian interpretation of the value of suffering and hardship. Malicious fate is a test sent to the sages and worthies by Heaven, and therefore suffering testifies to their moral

⁶² “Instructions to My Sons” 示兒, in *Qingdai wenlunxuan*, p. 49.

⁶³ “Preface to the Collection of the Hall of Honesty and Simplicity” 敦素堂集序, in *Qingdai wenlunxuan*, p. 106.

⁶⁴ *Mencius*, 6B:15, in Jiao Xun 焦循, *Mengzi zhengyi* 孟子正義 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), vol. 25, p. 864. Translation is from *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, volume 1, p. 155.

integrity. The political upheaval during the Ming-Qing transition allowed the remnant subjects to identify with what is said in *Mencius*. The only difference is that the great responsibility Heaven confers on the remnant subjects is not to achieve political accomplishment, but to be a great poet. Suffering has value because it brings out one's individuating nature, refines it, and makes it the basis of great poetry.

Concomitant with the discovery of the moral value intrinsic in suffering is the tendency to glorify it as an aesthetic entity. While Huang Zongxi and other remnant subjects emphasize the bleak situation, they never complain about their misfortunes, but instead see hope in misfortunes. In his preface to Jin Jieshan's poetry collection, Huang Zongxi ascribes lyricism to his depiction of the awe-inspiring picture of the political turmoil by making an analogy between social upheavals and overwhelming nature. His idea develops from the traditional poetics that frustration gives birth to great poetry and echoes the celebration of suffering in Confucian classics. Huang Zongxi suggests that political turmoil releases masculine strength repressed by the Confucian cultivation. Zhu Heling elaborates the idea by associating suffering with the beautiful scenery of autumn.

From now on the fragile becomes sturdy, the moist becomes dry, and the delicate becomes strong. Flowers and fruits are preserved. Together they make the majestic and splendid scenery. Ginkgoes, maples, and tallow trees bloom after frost. Red leaves and green shades are mixed and luxuriant. When we face them, we feel chill; when we look at them, we are dazzled. This is indeed a magnificent sight of the world. Had the frustrating air of autumn not pierced their bones with cold force, how could they achieve such magnificence? It's strange that nowadays people only appreciate charming peaches and delicate willows⁶⁵ swaying in the spring fields, but don't know that the frozen trees and cold mountains that look like paintings and beautiful brocade are more graceful and pleasant. ... Those that fall lead to substance. Those that are hidden are storehouses of essence.

自是而脆者坚，润者燥，靡者劲，华实敛藏，结为绚烂，鸭脚枫柏，经霜作花，红叶翠阴，参差绮縠，当之者神寒，望之者目眩——此亦天下之壮观绝采也。使非秋气坎，寒威砭肌之后，

⁶⁵ Charming peaches and delicate willows are also metaphors for beautiful women or prostitutes.

其何以得此哉！吾怪夫今之人徒知夭桃弱柳，獻媚春畦；而不知凍樹丹青，寒山錦繡，尤可觀而可樂也。……夫剝落者，充實之因也，闕藏者，菁華之府也。

The quote is from Zhu Heling's "Preface to the Collection of Brocade Forests" 纈林集序. Obviously, it is under the influence of the traditional discourse on autumn which associates autumn with frustrated, unappreciated talents. "Alas for the breath of autumn! /Wan and drear: flower and leaf fluttering fall and turn to decay; /... Heartsick and sighing sore: for the cold draws on and strikes into a man; /Distraught and disappointed: leaving the old and to new places turning; /Afflicted: the poor esquire has lost his office and his heart rebels; /Desolate: on his long journey he rests with never a friend; /Melancholy: he nurses a private sorrow."⁶⁶ However, in Zhu Heling's view autumn lacks the traits of anguish, depression, and self-pity in the traditional discourse. Desolate as autumn is, it promises future fulfillment. Flowers and leaves wither and fall, but they are the overture to fruits. Seeds are hidden in the fruits, but they predict the harvest of the next year. Autumn offers what Zhu Heling calls the "majestic and splendid scenery" which is epitomized in the maple trees turning to gorgeous red only after the exposure to harsh weather. Just as Huang Zongxi ridicules the exquisite taste of the indolent poet and denies that poetry is for happiness, Zhu Heling repudiates delicate beauty which is represented in traditional poetic images such as charming peaches and delicate willows, the images that evoke a sense of languor and frivolity. What they advocate is a new poetic and aesthetic style, with imposing strength, fortitude, dignity, and a tendency to inspire awe, that is very close to the sublime. If the beautiful in poetry implies limited scale, femininity, and delicacy, the sublime Huang Zongxi and Zhu Heling conceive is represented in grand nature, in literary works that have the same qualities as grand nature, and in the noble character of those who create these works.

⁶⁶ "Nine Changes" 九辯 attributed to Song Yu 宋玉, David Hawkes' translation, *The Songs of the South*, p. 209.

Autumn is Zhu Heling's metaphor for his time. Autumn is an epoch of mutation 變. The term "mutation" not only suggests political change, a falling away from the norm, and devolution of society in Chinese poetics, but it also implies the concept of cyclic time that desolation will turn into restoration. The multiple meanings of the epoch of mutation explain the repeated references to the "mutated *feng*," "mutated *ya*," "mutated *zhi*" by Huang Zongxi and other remnant subjects. In addition, the term "mutation" also suggests the change of the identity of literati. Huang Zongxi believes that the "solitary man" represents the deviation from literati 文人之一變 and that the writing of "solitary man" is not simply literati's writing. "Even though his writing is confined and invisible in the world, it would not be simply literati's writing like those buried in Liu Tui's tomb of writing,⁶⁷ which would rot to be soil and would be evaporated to nurture mushrooms and funguses." 錮而不出，豈若劉蛻之文冢，腐為墟壤，蒸為芝菌，文人之文而已乎？

Huang Zongxi's criticism of literati suggests that he conceives of new identities for lettered men. Echoing his suspicion of the excessive refinement of Confucian cultivation, Huang Zongxi replaces literati *wenren* with the hero *haojie* 豪傑, a term that implies martial spirit.

The spirit of heroes must reside in some vocation. From works of Dao and moral power by Laozi and Zhuangzi, works of law by Shen Buhai and Han Fei, Sima Qian's historical writing, exegeses on classics by Zheng Xuan and Fu Qian, prose by Han Yu and Ouyang Xiu, poems by Li Bai and Du Fu, down to Shikuang's music, Guo Shoujing's works of calendar, drama plays by Wang Shifu and Guan Hanqing, they are vocations where their spirits reside. If one's spirit cannot find a place to reside, he would be like a crooked dragon, a crippled tiger, or an imprisoned warrior. He is repressed, but his anguish would heroically break away from confinement to move the heaven and earth.

從來豪傑之精神，不能無所寓。老莊之道德，申韓之刑名，左遷之史，鄭服之經，韓歐之文，李杜之詩，下至師曠之音聲，郭守敬之律曆，王實甫、關漢卿之院本，皆其一生之精神所寓也。苟不得其所寓，則若龍攀虎跛，壯士囚縛，擁勇鬱遏，忿憤激訐，溢而四出，天地為之動色。

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⁶⁷ Liu Tui (821-after 874) buried his writings, lamenting their futility in "Inscription for the Entombment of My Prose at the Doushuai Temple in Zizhou" 梓州都率寺文冢銘.

⁶⁸ Huang Zongxi, "Preface to Jin Xiongfang's Poetry" 靳熊封詩序, in *Huang Lizhou wenji*, p. 353.

In this quote, Huang Zongxi breaks away from the Confucian hierarchy of enterprise. The list of people he calls heroes includes musicians, astronomers, and dramatists, as well as Confucian classists, masters of different philosophical schools, historians, and poets. They devote themselves to arduous, creative enterprises, manifest their unrivalled talent in them, and achieve incomparable accomplishments. What determines their value is not the nature of the enterprise, but the intensity of their commitment and the quality of their work. The term “hero” suggests irrepressible, intrinsic energy and ambition. It carries the mark of the epoch of mutation, when endless war and violence prohibited heroes from pursuing their enterprise. Huang Zongxi’s belief in savage strength that underlies his criticism of Confucian cultivation and his celebration of strong poetic emotion is also seen in his analogy between hurt animals and heroes. The tragedy that heroes cannot fulfill their aspiration in an age of political turmoil gives them the same pain as precious animals suffer from bodily disfiguration. If disfiguration provokes the formidable power of animals, the sociopolitical constraint intensifies the anguish and courage of heroes that eventually turn into the power of subversion to awaken and change the world.

Huang Zongxi believes that another identity literati should take up is the historian. In his much quoted “Preface to Mr. Wan Lüan’s Poetry” 萬履安先生詩序, Huang Zongxi states that poetry must be firmly rooted in the historical circumstances and partake of the function of historiography.

The reason that the heaven and earth were not destroyed and that moral teachings were preserved against all odds were mostly because those who had lost their country let flow their heart’s blood in their poetry, even as they perished with the morning dew. For at this juncture historical records had perished. It is fortunate that people who retired from the world left their writings in remote regions. Their bitter words would be hard to be destroyed. Their dedication flickered in rotten paper and faint ink. They were alive in their graves, and fragrance of the soil rose from the earth. How little is it known that when historical records perished, poetry was created?

而天地之所以不毀，名教之所以僅存者，多在亡國之人物，血心流注，朝露同晞，史於是而亡矣。猶幸野制遙傳，苦語難銷，此耿耿者明滅於爛紙昏墨之餘，九原可作，地起泥香，庸詎知史亡而後詩作乎？⁶⁹

In Chinese history, official historiography of is compiled by the victors who suppress or distort historical truth. Thus poetry must take the place of historical records to save “from oblivion what is defeated and destroyed, often what is missing, suppressed, or distorted in the official historiography compiled by the victors”.⁷⁰ Huang Zongxi’s confirmation of the value of poetry in an age of moral decline requires that the poet take up the role of the historian and poetry assume the mission of historical writing. The poet-historian is what Huang Zongxi calls the “solitary man” or the “hero,” because the early Qing is the time of action and force and it demands the heroic courage of the poet-historian to record historical truth.

From the analysis of the discourse on solitude and the celebration of strong poetic emotion, we see the cultural continuity and discontinuity between the late Ming and early Qing. The remnant subjects inherit the late-Ming discourse on solitude to develop a desolate style of poetry as their response to the political turmoil during the dynastic transition. This poetic style is closely related to their awareness of the tremendous sociopolitical changes of the early Qing. They conceive of the period as autumn, an epoch of changes, that witnesses decline yet gestates hope. Consequently, they cry out for a new type of literati and a new type of writing in accordance with the changes of the time. I suggest using the term lyrical self to portray the fundamental qualities of the new type of literati advocated by the remnant subjects and Huang Zongxi in particular. Lyrical self is the one who distances himself from the mainstream value system as well as the exquisite taste and life style of literati. He embraces intense emotion, but for him emotion is the synonym of moral commitment. He is created by suffering, and in turn he pours

⁶⁹ Huang Lizhou wenji, p. 346, translation from *Trauma and Transcendence*, p. 78-9.

⁷⁰ See *Trauma and Transcendence*, p. 79.

out his pent-up frustration to writing. By doing so, he challenges the orthodox Confucian poetics of gentleness and restraint. Lyrical self of the early Qing is unique in that it is the product of the moral turn of early Qing literary culture. He takes into account the profound distrust of the remnant subjects in the credibility of literary words. He is brave enough to take up the mission of the historian when historical truth is suppressed or distorted, so he is closer to the martial hero and historian than conventional literati.

The Negation of Self and Role Play

In 1671, three years before Huang Zongxi writing his preface for Huang Zonghui's collection, a book of a completely opposite nature was published. As can be known from its title, Li Yu's 李漁 (1611-1680) *Idle Feelings in Casual Expressions* 閒情偶寄 is dedicated to refined taste and indolent life style Huang Zongxi painstakingly rebukes. Li Yu, a professional writer famous for his novellas and dramatic works, was anything but an ardent advocate of Confucian orthodoxy, but his distance from the Confucian tradition did not make him an ally of the remnant subjects like Huang Zongxi. What might have been even worse from the view of Huang Zongxi and other remnant subjects is that Li Yu's idle feelings did not reside in poetry, painting, calligraphy, and landscape as cultivated literati, but instead in dramatic plays, delicacies, garden designing, and beautiful women, the tastes that catered to urban bourgeois citizens and middlebrows, but scholar-officials might have discredited as trivial and vulgar however much they enjoyed them in secret. Li Yu's resurging popularity among Chinese urban citizens in the last twenty years bears witness to the rise of a new middle class as well as a form of political escapism that prevails in this class. His popularity also implies the alleviation of the shame caused by national crisis and the relief of the anxiety of bearing the burden of a defeated culture that haunted both the early Qing remnant subjects and the early twentieth century Chinese intellectuals. The disappearance

of historical urgency in the last twenty years allows Li Yu to exude his charm again, but he was not insensitive to the pain and suffering looming on his age. However, unlike many others, he has a curious ingenuity to transform pain into pleasure.

I was born to distress, and lived in frustration. Throughout my life from childhood to old age, there has been no single moment when I was relieved. Only when I write dramatic music and scripts can I release my pent-up emotion, relieve my anguish, and be able to overstep my authority to be the happiest person in the world, feeling that the joy of wealth and rank cannot surpass this, and that whatever we could do in reality is incomparable to what we could do freely in illusion. If I want to be an official, I would reach the highest rank immediately. If I want to retire, I would enter mountains and forests in a flash. If I want to be a talented man, I would be the reincarnation of Du Fu and Li Bai. If I want to marry the most beautiful woman, I would be the spouse of Wang Qiang and Xishi. If I want to be an immortal or a Bodhisattva, the mountain of immortals in the west is right in front of my inkstone and penholder. If I want to be filial and loyal, I would be peers of Yao, Shun and Peng Jian. Drama is different from other genres. If you write an allegory in other genres, you must quote ancient books and make indirect analogies, being cultivated and restrained. Even though you have discontent, you must hold it back. Even though you have great literary talent, you must only display part of it. If you are slightly short of a calm temper, or indulge in your talent a little too much, people would criticize you for lacking the poet's point and being frivolous. It is difficult to have your works recited and sung everywhere if you write in other genres. When you write scripts of plays, what you should be afraid of is to be too reserved about what is on your mind and unable to express it to full extent. However, speaking straight from your heart is not an easy thing. Word is the sound of one's heart. If you want to speak on behalf of another person, you should have the mind of him. How could you put yourself in his shoes without the aid of dreams and spiritual journeys? What does it mean to put yourself in his shoes? It goes without saying that you should have upright thoughts on behalf of him if he is upright. Even if he has evil thoughts, you should act with expediency instead of with orthodox principle, having evil thoughts temporarily on behalf of him. Make sure that you can blurt out what is hidden in his mind.

予生憂患之中，處落魄之境，自幼至長，自長至老，總無一刻舒眉，惟于制曲填詞之頃，非但郁藉以舒，慍為之解，且嘗僭作兩間最樂之人，覺富貴榮華，其受用不過如此，未有真境之為所欲為，能出幻境縱橫之上者。我欲做官，則頃刻之間便臻榮貴；我欲致仕，則轉盼之際又入山林；我欲作人間才子，即為杜甫、李白之後身；我欲娶絕代佳人，即作王嬙、西施之元配；我欲成仙作佛，則西天蓬島即在硯池筆架之前；我欲盡孝輸忠，則君治親年，可躋堯、舜、彭、錢之上。非若他種文字，欲作寓言，必須遠引曲譬，蘊藉包含。十分牢騷，還須留住六七分。八斗才學，止可使出二三升。稍欠和平，略施縱送，即謂失風人之旨，犯佻達之嫌，求為家絃戶誦者難矣。填詞一家，則惟恐含蓄而不言，言之不盡。是則是矣，須知暢所欲言亦非易事。言者，心之聲也，欲代此一人立言，先宜代此一人立心。若非夢往神遊，何謂設身處地？無論立心端正者，我當設身處地，代生端正之想；即遇立心邪辟者，我亦當舍經從權，暫為邪辟之思。務使心曲隱微，隨口唾出。⁷¹

⁷¹ Jiang Jurong 江巨榮 and Lu Shourong 盧壽榮, ed., *Xianqing ouji* 閒情偶寄 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000), p. 64.

The speech is from Li Yu's treatise on drama in *Idle Feelings in Casual Expressions*. His beginning description of suffering and frustration is not different from those by the remnant subjects, but his attention immediately moves to the opposite direction, from frustration to pleasure provided by imaginative writing. It is not without reason that Li Yu has long been belittled as a petty, vulgar mind. His shameless abandonment of individuated selfhood to become the voices of more preferable human existences is punctuated with an unabashed avowal of avoiding suffering and frustration that any great soul must have courage to endure. Li Yu's treatise on the techniques and intellectual benefits of dramatic writing reveals the theory of dramatic mask. As is pointed out earlier in the paper, a group of adventurous late-Ming literati devoted themselves to popular genres such as drama and fiction, showing that drama and fiction allowed them to explore the imaginative realm impossible in poetry and prose. A closer link between Li Yu and the late Ming discourse on dramatic writing can be found in "Miscellaneous Writing" 雜說 written by Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602), one of the most original thinkers of the late Ming whom Jiao Hong impassionedly admired⁷². In this essay, Li Zhi summarizes the principle of dramatic writing as "seizing the other's wine cup to pour wine on knots in the writer's own heart (pent-up emotions)" 奪他人之酒杯, 澆自己之壘塊.

The writer must have had many groundless and strange things in his mind, as well as many things he wanted to say yet feared to say. He had a lot to say from time to time, but couldn't find his interlocutors. What he wanted to say could not be repressed anymore after it had been accumulated for long time. Once his feelings were stimulated by the corresponding scene, what he saw made him heave a sigh. He seized the other's wine cup to pour wine on knots in his heart.⁷³ He poured out his grievance, and was moved by misfortune a thousand years ago.

⁷² Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 pointed out that Jiao Hong firmly believed in Li Zhi's thoughts 篤信卓吾之學. *Mingru xuean* 明儒學案 (北京: 中華書局, 1985), vol. 35, p. 829.

⁷³ This is an allusion to Ruan Ji 阮籍 in *Shishuo xinyu*. "Knots in Ruan Ji's heart (his pent-up emotions) must be poured by wine" 阮籍胸中壘塊, 故須酒澆之. Liu Yiqing 劉義慶, *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語, vol. 23 "Dissipated"

He wrote the words that were like jades and pearls. They were so brilliant that they illuminated the Milky Way, creating patterns in the sky. Therefore he was so proud of himself that he couldn't stop himself from shouting madly, weeping, and wailing. He would rather have readers and listeners of his work grinding their teeth in anger and wanting to kill him than having his work hidden in famous mountain and thrown to water and fire. I read his work as if seeing him in person. He must have been treated unjustly by the emperor, ministers, and friends, so he started his own story in terms of a couple's separation and reunion.

其胸中有如許無狀可怪之事，其喉間有如許欲吐而不敢吐之物，其口頭又時時有許多欲語而莫可所以告語之處，蓄極積久，勢不能遏。一旦見景生情，觸目興歎，奪他人之酒杯，澆自己之壘塊；訴心中之不平，感數奇于千載。既已噴玉唾珠，昭回雲漢，為章於天矣，遂亦自負，發狂大叫，流涕慟哭，不能自止。寧使見者聞者切齒咬牙，欲殺欲割，而終不忍藏於名山，投之水火。余覽斯記，想見其為人，其當時必有大不得意于君臣朋友之間者，故借夫婦離合因緣以發其端。⁷⁴

This is Li Zhi's imagination of the way in which the writers of *The Western Chamber* and *Bowing to the Moon*, two famous plays from the Yuan dynasty, write their masterpieces. The creative force behind the works, as is repeated by many poetic critics, is the dramatist's frustration due to the unjust social relations, but unlike the poet who writes about himself in poetry, the dramatist tells his own story by putting on the masks of his characters. Li Zhi believes that the two dramatists write plays because their thoughts are too elusive to have a definite shape and too offensive to be revealed in public. The fictional character's story sublimates the dramatist's emotion, giving him a tangible and acceptable form to work on, but the core of the dramatist's creation is his individuated selfhood.

Li Zhi's passionate imagination of the dramatist's empathy with his characters reveals his idea that the talented dramatist is ensnared in evil social relations and that his dramatic writing suggests the intense confrontation between his individuating nature and social relations. As a successor of the late Ming discourse on dramatic writing, Li Yu continues the association between the imaginative power of dramatic writing and the hostile world, indicating that the

任誕, Zhang Wanqi 張萬起 and Liu Shangci 劉尚慈 *Shishuo xinyu yizhu* 世說新語譯注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), vol. 23, 51, p. 757.

⁷⁴ *Mingdai wenlunxuan*, p.232.

dramatist can take refuge in dramatic imagination, but he also moves the discourse to a different direction by emphasizing the dramatist's happy absorption in his dramatic characters. He is aware of the limitation of the Confucian poetics of gentleness and restraint, but he resorts to drama for literary freedom as well as for an escape from suffering that is offered by dramatic imagination and impersonation.

The key to Li Yu's escape from suffering and his pursuit of happiness lies in forgetting and negating self, a concept deeply rooted in the Taoist and Buddhist discourse. The pithy maxim "I have lost myself" 吾喪我 from *Zhuangzi*⁷⁵ has been a crucial intellectual source to instruct Chinese literati to deal with the world. "Losing myself" means to forget the existence of the self, not taking the self as the center of perception, cognition, and judgment. The result of "losing myself" is to think of everything on the same level and eliminate the confrontation between the self and the world. "Losing myself" is associated with the distrust of absolute moral values, a standpoint advocated by *Zhuangzi*. *Zhuangzi* has a lot of stories about talented and righteous men being destroyed due to their talent and moral integrity. The beginning of the chapter twenty-six "External Objects" 外物 of *Zhuangzi* lists righteous officials and filial sons in Chinese history who are wronged and executed because their character and behavior cannot get along with the world. They are said to have their "mind trussed and suspended between heaven and earth, bewildered and lost in delusion" 心若懸於天地之間, 慰瞽沉屯.⁷⁶ Since "external things cannot be counted on" 外物不可必, the text suggests that we should give up confronting external things so that "in time all is consumed and the Way comes to an end" 儼然而道盡.⁷⁷ Guo Xiang 郭象 (252-

⁷⁵ Chapter 2 "The Sorting Which Evens Things Out" 齊物論, *Zhuangzi jishi*, vol.1, p. 45.

⁷⁶ *Zhuangzi jishi*, vol. 9, p. 920, Burton Watson's translation.

⁷⁷ Ibid, Burton Watson's translation.

312) and Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (ca.601-690), two commentators of *Zhuangzi*, relate this teaching of overlooking external things with the concept of “losing myself,” warning that if one cannot lose oneself he would be caught in the cyclic process of sadness and happiness as the circumstances change.⁷⁸

The world is full of sufferings from the view of Buddhism, and the aim of the Buddhist teaching is to get rid of sufferings and achieve happiness. Besides all the tangible sufferings, including illness, death, separated from beloved ones, seeking things that cannot be attained, among others, there are also the afflictive hindrances of anger, nescience and so forth, the mental states that determine the way people perceive the tangible sufferings and make it impossible for them to understand the illusory nature of all the sufferings. The basis of all the afflictive hindrances is the attachment to the notion of an enduring, inherent self. The Buddhist teaching emphasizes that human existence is made of the five compositional elements, form, feeling, perception, impulse and consciousness. Form is matter, the body, and materiality; feeling is receptive or sensory function; perception refers to images that surface in the mind; impulse is will, intention, or the mental function that accounts for craving, consciousness is the cognitive or discriminating function.⁷⁹ Since the five compositional elements are impermanent, there is no enduring self either.

Like many pre-modern Chinese literati, Li Yu must have internalized the basic teachings of Taoism and Buddhism without having to be a restrict Taoist or Buddhist. He does not follow the Taoist teaching to transcend both suffering and happiness, nor does he renounce the world to

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Digital Dictionary of Buddhism,
[http://www.buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id\('b4e94-860a'\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id('b4e94-860a'))

achieve happiness in the Buddhist sense, but his idea that happiness lies in forgetting and negating self resonates with the *Zhuangzi* and Buddhist teachings. His idea of forgetting and negating self is also related to his discovery of the power of impersonation. The late Ming and early Qing literati's interest in impersonation and role play is a prominent cultural phenomenon that results from the popularity of dramatic performance in the seventeenth century. There is a long tradition of comparing life to dramatic performance in Chinese literature since the Tang dynasty, but it is only during the Ming-Qing transition that the thought is crystallized in a lot of theatrical metaphors and becomes a trend.⁸⁰ Zhang Dai's idea that one should be absorbed in theatrical roles to forget oneself and all the unhappiness along with it is certainly an exemplification of this trend.

Yu Huai 余懷 (1616-1696), a remnant subject of the Ming dynasty who refused to serve the Qing government, and You Tong 尤侗 (1618-1704), a Qing official who rose to prominence in the Qing court, wrote prefaces for Li Yu's *Idle Feelings in Casual Expressions* in the 1670s. Despite their different political choices, they both expand Li Yu's poetics of impersonation from a writing technique to a life style, trying to create a genealogy for historical escapism.

Xie An used to live in seclusion at the east mountain. Common people depended on him to save the country, yet he travelled with singing girls and played chess games in his villa. ... Bai Juyi had upright character and magnanimity that everyone admired, but his singing girls, Xie Hao, Chen Jie, Purple Silk, Water Chestnut, performed the "Skirts of Rainbow, Feather Coats". When he was removed from the post of Minister of Justice, he acquired hundreds of slaves who learned musical instruments and singing. Su Shi was upright. He did not try to be different from others, nor did he abandon his own principle to follow others, but he enjoyed the company of his concubines, Zither Song and Morning Clouds, the boat with the prow painted with a dragon, and the incense burner with a handle in the shape of a magpie tale. His

⁸⁰ Goyama Kiwamu, "明末清初における'人生はドラマである'の説," in *Chūgoku tetsugakushi kenkyū ronshū: Araki Kyōju taikyū kinen* 荒木教授退休纪念中国哲学史研究论集, Fukuoka-shi: Ashi Shobō 福岡市: 苇书房, 1981. As for the association of drama and Buddhism, see Liao Zhaohe 廖肇亨, *Zhongbian shichan mengxi: Mingmo qingchu fojiao wenhua lunshu de chengxian yu kaizhan* 中边 诗禅 梦戏: 明末清初佛教文化论述的呈现与开展 (Taipei: Yunchen, 2008). For theatrical metaphors, see chapter 3.

demeanor evoked Huan Yi in the East Jin dynasty who sighed whenever hearing unaccompanied singing.⁸¹ Han Yu dispelled the clouds and expelled the crocodile.⁸² He was an exemplar of the court, but when he hosted a banquet, he always asked two maids to play the *pipa* and zither. Therefore those who have achieved great accomplishments and written real works must have feelings beyond common customs and candid and remarkable manners just as Xie An and other gentlemen. Now Mr. Li used his refined taste and ingenious thoughts to write the book with painstaking effort and discretion. How can we say that the supreme achievement in the business of state does not lie in it?

昔謝文靖高臥東山，系天下蒼生之望，而游必攜妓，墅則圍棋。……白香山道風雅量，為世所欽，而謝好，陳結，紫綃，菱角，驚破霓裳羽衣之曲，罷刑部侍郎時，得臧獲之習管磬弦歌者，指百以歸。蘇文忠稟心剛正，不立異，不詭隨，而琴操，朝雲，螭頭，鵲尾，有每聞清歌，輒喚奈何之致。韓昌黎開雲驅鱷，師表朝廷，而每當賓客之會，輒出二侍女合彈琵琶、箏。故古今來能建大勳業、作真文章者，必有超世絕俗之情，磊落嶙峋之韻，如文靖諸公是也。今李子以雅淡之才，巧妙之思，經營慘澹締造周詳，即經國之大業，何遽不在？⁸³

The transcendence of historical circumstances is often in conjunction with a withdrawal to the historical past. Yu Huai's preface is testimony of this conjunction. His preface creates a genealogy of famous official-scholars who enjoyed leisure entertainments yet did not fail to achieve great accomplishments. By associating Li Yu with these historical figures, Yu Huai's preface elevates Li Yu's book to the height of the supreme achievement in the business of state. Behind this conflation of the literary work and political achievement stands Cao Pi's 曹丕 (187-226) canonical discourse on literature. "I would say that literary works are the supreme achievement in the business of state, a splendor that does not decay. A time will come when a person's life ends; glory and pleasure go no further than this body. To carry both to eternity, there is nothing to compare with the unending permanence of the literary work" 蓋文章，經國之

⁸¹ *Shishuoxinyu* 世說新語, 23.42.

⁸² Han Yu wrote "Text for the Crocodiles" 鱷魚文, in which he formally banished the reptiles from his prefecture. Ma Qichang 馬其昶, ed., *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu* 韓昌黎文集校注 (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1964), pp. 330-1.

⁸³ *Xianqing ouji*, p.2.

大業，不朽之盛事。年壽有時而盡，榮樂止乎其身，二者必至之常期，未若文章之無窮。⁸⁴ Cao Pi's analogy between the literary work and political achievement suggests that the ultimate anxiety of human life is death and that writing is the only way to save one's life from oblivion. By directing the reader's attention to the threat of death, Yu Huai's preface deviates from the remnant subjects' discourse on suffering caused by sociopolitical relations and points to the existential pain often addressed in the Taoist and Buddhist discourse. In this sense, the historical escapism advocated in Yu Huai's preface echoes Li Yu's idea of forgetting oneself in that they both pay more attention to the threat intrinsic in life itself than to the political turmoil during the dynastic transition. If Li Yu's absorption in theatrical role play helps him escape history as well as the threat of death, Yu Huai's preface points out that playing the role of official-scholars who found refuge in leisure entertainments and writing a book on such entertainments is a way of achieving immortality.

You Tong's preface is in the same vein, discussing the existential pain of life.

Music and beautiful woman are where talented men can lodge their mind. Writing is the great creator's musician. I think of the ancients, such as Wu Zixu playing the vertical flute (when begging alms)⁸⁵, Mi Heng (173-198) beating the drum (to humiliate Cao Cao),⁸⁶ Ji Kang (225-264) playing the *qin* (a seven-stringed plucked instrument in some way similar to the zither), Ma Rong (79-166) playing the bamboo flute⁸⁷, Wang Wei (701?-761) called the "disciple of the *pipa*" (a plucked string instrument with a fretted fingerboard)⁸⁸, He Ning (898-955) called the "master of lyrics", Zhang Chang lining his wife's eyebrows⁸⁹, Xie Kun

⁸⁴ "A Discourse on Literature" 論文, in Li Shan 李善 ed. *Wenxuan* 文選 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), vol. 52, pp. 2270, translation from Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 68.

⁸⁵ The anecdote can be found in *Zuozhuan* 左传, *Guoyu* 国语, and *Wu Yue chunqiu* 吴越春秋.

⁸⁶ The story can be found in "Mi Heng's Biography" 禰衡傳 in *History of the Latter Han* 後漢書.

⁸⁷ 馬融's "Fu on the Long Flute" 長笛賦.

⁸⁸ A story of Wang Wei in *Account of Accumulated Anomalies* 集異記 says that Wang Wei won Taiping Princess' recognition because of being good at playing *pipa*.

⁸⁹ The story can be found in "Zhang Chang's Biography" in *History of the Han Dynasty* 漢書.

flirting with the beautiful girl and having two teeth broken by her⁹⁰, Cao Zhi (192-232) wearing makeup, Sima Xiangru (?-118 bc.) resigning office,⁹¹ Song Qi (998-1061) bearing cold weather when his maids giving him a dozen vests,⁹² Han Xizai (902-970) wearing the cassock to beg food at the entertainment courtesan.⁹³ These remarkably talented men suffered adversity. They escaped depression and boredom by lodging their hope in diversion. They are comparable to those who are so tired that they need to find lodging after they have traveled a hundred miles. They are elegant, completely different from vulgar people who go to brothels such as Pleasant Spring or who have many concubines in the Garden of Golden Valley.⁹⁴ Though the things these talented people did are naturally graceful, it is writing that helped them circulate.

聲色者，才人之寄旅；文章者，造物之工師。我思古人，如子胥吹簫，正平撾鼓，叔夜彈琴，季長弄笛，王維為“琵琶弟子”，和凝稱“曲子相公”，以至京兆畫眉，幼與折齒，子建傅粉，相如掛冠，子京之半臂忍寒，熙載之衲衣乞食：此皆絕世才人，落魄無聊，有所托而逃焉。猶之行百里者，車怠馬煩，寄宿旅舍已爾，其視宜春院里畫鼓三千，梓澤園中金釵十二，雅俗之別，奚翅徑庭哉！然是物也，雖自然之妙麗，借文章而始傳。⁹⁵

You Tong's preface points out that talented men in the past lodged their mind in the company of women, music and writing to escape depression and boredom. Some of the historical figures mentioned in the preface, such as Wu Zixu, Mi Heng and Sima Xiangru, must have their depression and boredom related to politics, but for other figures depression and boredom was intrinsic in their lives. Like these talented men in the past, Li Yu escapes depression and boredom by playing their roles and indulging in recording a variety of diversions.

Over a decade before the publication of Li Yu's book, Jin Shengtan 金聖嘆 (1608-1661) published his *Commentary on The Western Chamber* 評點西廂記 in 1656. In his two prefaces to the commentary, Jin Shengtan expresses his existential anxiety. Two prefaces are titled

⁹⁰ The story can be found in "Xie Kun's Biography" 謝鯤傳 in *History of the Jin Dynasty* 晉書.

⁹¹ The story can be found in "Sima Xiangru's Biography" 司馬相如列傳 in *Shiji*, vol.117. Sima Xiangru claimed to be ill and stayed at home, without an intention of being promoted.

⁹² An anecdote about Song Qi in *Miscellaneous Writings in the Eastern Studio* 東軒筆記 says that his maids gave him a dozen vests for fear that he caught cold in a banquet. Song Qi refused to accept any for fear of showing favor to one maid over others.

⁹³ The story can be found in Zheng Wenbao's 鄭文寶 *Recent Events of the Southern Tang* 南唐近事.

⁹⁴ The Garden of is also called the Garden of Golden Valley. It is Shi Chong's 石崇 villa.

⁹⁵ *Xianqing ouji* 閒情偶寄, p. 5

“Weeping for the Ancients” 慟哭古人 and “Dedicated to People in Future” 留贈後人. At the beginning of the first preface, he laments the contrast between his finite life and infinite time.

The great kalpa is vast and mighty from the beginning until now. I don't know how many years have passed in between. Hundreds of thousands of years have passed swiftly like flowing water, whirling clouds, galloping wind and lightning. Everything is gone. There is a temporary “I” in this year and this month. This temporary “I” cannot help but will also be gone swiftly like flowing water, whirling clouds, galloping wind and lightning. However, fortunately I have my temporary existence here. Since I have my temporary existence here, what diversion should I have to while it away?

今夫浩蕩大劫，自初迄今，我則不知其有幾萬萬年月也。幾萬萬年月皆如水逝云卷，風馳電掣，無不盡去，而至於今年今月而暫有我。此暫有之我，又未嘗不水逝云卷，風馳電掣而疾去也。然而幸而猶尚暫有於此。幸而猶尚暫有於此，則我將以何等消遣而消遣之？⁹⁶

The great kalpa mentioned in the preface has no metaphorical connection with the political turmoil as in the writings of the remnant subjects⁹⁷, but literally refers to a long period of time in Buddhist cosmology. Existential anxiety of finite life invites Jin Shengtan's introverted reflections on the meaning of “I.”

I am not me. I was not me before I was born. I will not be me after I die. Therefore though I exist temporarily, I am not me.

我固非我也。未生已前非我也，既去已后又非我也。然則今雖猶尚暫在，實非我也。

Since I was born, my life should be eternal. If my life cannot be eternal, I should not be born. 既已生我，便應永在；脫不能爾，便應勿生。⁹⁸

Like Li Yu, Jin Shengtan's solution is to forget himself by indulging in theatrical roles. Though he does not write plays, his commentary on plays and fictions satisfies his desire of standing in the shoes of others. “All I do is to amuse myself when I find no way to amuse myself” 我亦于無

⁹⁶ *Jin Shengtan pingdian xixiangji* 金聖嘆評點西廂記 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008), p.1

⁹⁷ For instance, in his “Preface to Tao'an's Memories in Dreams” 陶庵夢憶序, Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597-1689) says that his desire of achieving literary fame was as firm as Buddha's bones which could survive the fierce fire of kalpa 則其名根一點，堅固如佛家舍利，劫火猛烈，猶燒之不失也，clearly comparing the fierce fire of kalpa with the devastating upheavals during the Ming-Qing transition.

⁹⁸ *Jin Shengtan pingdian xixiangji*, p. 2.

法作消遣中隨意自作消遣而已矣。The great irony is that though Jin Shengtan was occupied with his existential anxiety that was irrelevant to sociopolitical relations, he was involved in the case called “Lamenting at the Temple of Confucius” 哭廟案 (1661), one of the major early Qing persecutions, and was finally executed by the Qing court.⁹⁹ This seems to show that the existential pain during the dynastic transition was inevitably associated with sociopolitical relations.

Li Yu’s “free expression in illusion” 幻境縱橫, Yu Huai’s “feelings beyond common customs and manners” 超世絕俗, You Tong’s “escaping depression and boredom by lodging their mind in diversion” 有所托而逃, and Jin Shengtan’s “diversion” 消遣 represent various forms of escapism. I suggest using the term theatrical self to describe their attempt to take refuge in theatrical roles, to escape history, and to get away from the existential pain that is intrinsic in human life.

The political upheavals during the Ming-Qing transition led to the early Qing literati’s different reflections on their identity and the meaning of writing. Beneath the surface of the political discontinuity was the cultural continuity between the late Ming and the early Qing. The ramifications of the late-Ming discourse on solitude and the late-Ming cult of passion are represented in the early Qing literati’s celebration of the value of suffering and intense poetic emotion as well as their absorption in theatrical role play. If for Huang Zongxi and the likeminded remnant subjects writing must be their moral response to the historical circumstances, for Li Yu and Jin Shengtan writing is a theatrical diversion. By giving a moral twist to the late Ming discourse, Huang Zongxi repudiates what he regards as late-Ming effiteness and excessive refinement, asking the early Qing literati to adopt the new identities of the martial hero and the historian, and urging them to sustain the confrontation between self and an alienating political

⁹⁹ The event is recorded in *Kumiao jilue* 哭廟紀略 and *Xinchou jiwen* 辛醜紀聞 by anonymous writers.

reality. At the other end of the spectrum, occupied with the existential pain of human life, man's finite yet boring existence, Li Yu, Yu Huai, You Tong, and Jin Shengtan take refuge in several levels of theatrical role play. They play the role of talented, unrestrained official-scholars in Chinese history who indulge in delights and leisure, imagine the lives of others by writing plays, and stand in the shoes of others by writing commentary on plays and fictions. Huang Zongxi's passionate glorification of suffering and Li Yu's unashamed pursuit of pleasure point to two ideas of the function and meaning of writing. However different they look, as the successors of the late Ming legacy, they share the same interest in playing protean roles, becoming the martial hero, the historian, or the one who lives the lives of others.

Chapter Two

All the World Is a Stage: Reading Poetry as Drama and Fiction

Wu Qi's 吳淇 (1615-1675) *Secure Discussion on the Six Dynasties Poems in Wenxuan Liuchao xuanshi dinglun* 六朝選詩定論¹ is a book full of paradoxes. Like many critics, the opening theoretical sections of *Liuchao xuanshi dinglun* are supposed to link the present to the authoritative past, but his critical practice reflects the intellectual world of the late Ming and early Qing. The gap between the theoretical sections and critical practice is a drama of contradictory values in a new age. Wu Qi tries to redeem the authoritative texts of the classics in the new intellectual world, making space for the influence of the new psychologizing criticism of the seventeenth century and the consequences of drama. Sometime earlier Tang Xianzu already indicates in his "Account of the God of Play, Master Qingyuan's Temple at Yihuang County" 宜黃縣戲神清源師廟記, "[Master Qiyuan] achieves the great Way in terms of games [drama]" 以遊戲而得道.² If drama leads to the enlightenment of the great Way for drama masters and amateurs, for Wu Qi, a literary critic finishing his work in the 1660s, imagination and playfulness provided by drama is indeed a new way of engaging classical tradition. Wu Qi's reading of poetry in terms of novel and drama commentary not only redefines the latter and renews poetic criticism by playful engagement in a manner typical of the late Ming intellectual world, it also reflects his way of dealing with political crisis by choosing withdrawal while linking it to role play.

Wu Qi's *Liuchao xuanshi dinglun* discusses poems in *Selections of Refined Literature* (*Wenxuan* 文選), the anthology that selects poems before the 12th year of the Tianjian 天監 reign

¹ *Liuchao xuanshi dinglun* bears Zhou Lianggong's 周亮工 preface written in 1669. The book must be finished before that. All citations of *Liuchao xuanshi dinglun* are from *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu bubian* 四庫全書存目叢書補編 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2001), vol. 11. I give volume and page numbers in parentheses.

² *Tang Xianzu quanji* 湯顯祖全集, ed. Xu Shuofang 徐朔方 (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1998), vol. 34.

in the Liang Dynasty when the compiler, Crown Prince of Resplendent Brilliance (Zhaoming Taizi), Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501-531) died. Thus Wu Qi's "six dynasties" are different from what we think today. They refer to the Han, Wei, Jin, Song, Qi, and Liang Dynasties. *Liuchao xuanshi dinglun* has eighteen volumes that can be divided into three parts. The first part is the first volume, "The Reason of Writing Secure Discussion on the Six Dynasties Poems in *Wenxuan*" 六朝選詩定論緣起. In this part, Wu Qi attributes the origin of poetry to the *Classic of Poetry* compiled by Confucius, and compares Xiao Tong to Confucius as an influential compiler to determine the transmission of poetry in Chinese literary history. Also, he cites passages from the classics and pre-Qin "Masters Literature" in order to clarify his own concept of these aphorisms and his methodology of criticism. The second part is the second volume, "Systematic Discussion on Poems from the Ancient to the Present" 統論古今詩 and "Generalized Discussion on the Six Dynasties" 總論六朝. In "Systematic Discussion on Poems from the Ancient to the Present," Wu Qi classifies Chinese poetic history from the legendary three Dynasties to the early Qing into three eras (*ji* 際). In "Generalized Discussion on the Six Dynasties," he draws a chronological chart from the Qin to the Liang (it begins from the Qin because Wu Qi believes that the "Song of the River Yi" 易水歌 attributed to Jingke 荊軻 is the origin of Han *yuefu*), and provides poetic evaluations for each shorter period (*hui* 會). He also draws a chart of the origin of poets that completely follows Zhong Rong's 鍾嶸 (ca. 468-518) *Gradations of Poets* (*Shipin* 詩品). Apart from discussing the succession of poets, he also discusses other topics such as rhyme, musicology and the origin of five-syllable poetry, etc. The third part includes the rest volumes that discuss poets from the Han to the Liang chronologically (not without chronological errors but basically according to the order of dynasty), with the Emperor Gao (B.C. 256-B.C.195) in the first, and Jiang Yan 江淹 (444-505) in the end. Nineteen Old Poems 古詩十九首 and four other

“Old Lyrics” 古辭 are inserted between Zhang Heng 張衡 (78-139) and Yang Yun 楊惲 (d.56 B.C.).³ Before each dynasty and poet, he provides general evaluations, and for each poem he provides interpretative readings. In the third part, the last volume looks like a compendium, commenting on the “Song of the River Yi” separately and reaffirming the classification of three poetic eras. Admittedly, this is just a rough structure, and overlaps happen inevitably. For instance, some of Wu Qi’s ideas of literary history are scattered in the first part and third part.

Wu Qi’s Methodology of Poetic Criticism

In the first volume, Wu Qi uses geological metaphors to describe the poetic development from the *Classic of Poetry* to *Wenxuan*.

The *Classic of Poetry* and poems in *Wenxuan* face each other, as if the gorge of the Mount Ba confronts the gorge of the Mount Wu. In between there must be surging river, with its roaring air collapsing the sky, and breaking sound bending the earth. It reaches the summit of the strange spectacle. Then the air of two gorges is connected and the momentum becomes grander. 三百篇與選詩兩會，譬如巴巫之峽屹然對峙。其中定有江水洶湧，怒氣天崩，聲摧地折，極詭怪之奇觀。而後兩峽之氣始接而勢益壯。(1.2)

The surging river in between is Sao 騷 and exposition (*fu* 賦). In Wu Qi’s view, all poems, Sao and expositions in *Wenxuan* develop from the *Classic of Poetry*, while Sao and expositions mediate between the *Classic of Poetry* and poems in *Wenxuan*. He says, “If poets in *Wenxuan* did not get the concept of Sao and exposition, their poems were not *Wenxuan* poems at all.” (1.2) Thus in his critical practice in the third part, he traces both to the “Six Principles” (*Liuyi* 六義) in the *Classic of Poetry* and Sao tradition represented by Quan Yuan 屈原 and Jia Yi 賈誼 (B.C. 200-B.C.168) to explain the ideal standard for poems.

Wu Qi does not give his definition for Sao, but he talks about what kind of poets belong to Sao writers. Through the category of Sao writers, he explains what he means by the concept of Sao

³ Wu Qi seems to make an error in the chronological order of Zhang Heng and Yang Yun.

(*saoyi* 騷意). His discussion on Sao writers appears before his discussion on Ruan Ji's 阮籍 (210-263) poems. Though in the second volume he follows Zhong Rong in including Ruan Ji in the genealogy of the "Lesser Odes" 小雅, here he modifies it to say that Ruan Ji is a Sao writer.

Poems have not to be transmitted because of the moral quality of authors. Therefore poems transmitted from the antiquity are not necessarily from sages and worthies. However, only worthies can write Sao. ... It means that they have great scholarship and great ability, and can make great achievements, but they do not meet the right time. Only these people are permitted to write Sao.

凡詩不必以人傳. 故古來傳詩. 不盡出聖賢之手. 而騷非賢人莫作... 蓋謂其人有大學問. 大本領. 能做得大事業. 而不遇于時. 方許他作騷也. (7.6)

In the genealogy of Sao writers, Wu Qi puts Qu Yuan, Jia Yi, Ruan Ji and Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770), showing a conflict between his commitment to a historical account and his impulse to find unchanging norms that are instantiated in history.

Wu Qi compares Confucius' "paring down the Poems" (*shanshi* 刪詩) to Xiao Tong's selection of poems. Through this comparison he also explains the meaning of "secure discussion" in the title. Since the *Classic of Poetry* is discussed and fixed by the sage, he argues, later critics should believe it before they discuss it. On the contrary, *Wenxuan* poems have not been discussed and fixed by the sage, so that later critics should discuss them before they believe them. He points out that since the *Classic of Poetry* has won the authority, critics have provided a lot of discussions on it. On the other hand, because *Wenxuan* poems have not been elevated to the status of representing the sage's way (Dao 道), discussions on them are very few. Wu Qi regards his own responsibility as to establish the authority of *Wenxuan* poems through discussions, and he also justifies his status as a poetry critic by implying that he is partially undertaking the sage's project. He argues that though *Wenxuan* poems seem only to pay attention to literary patterning, principle and Dao are indeed implicit in the literary patterning. Discussions on *Wenxuan* poems should discover and analyze the principle of literary patterning, and after the literary patterning is

clear the fact that the literary patterning harmonizes with the Dao is also clear.

Wu Qi's goal is to incorporate *Wenxuan* poems in the genealogy of sages' literature, thus his discussions should also follow discussions on the *Classic of Poetry*. He argues that discussions on the *Classic of Poetry* are scattered in the classics and "Masters Literature." He interprets these passages to represent his own methodology of criticism. The first passage he cites is from "Canon of Shun" 舜典 in the *Classic of Documents* 尚書.

The Emperor Shun says, "Kui, I order you to be in charge of music, and teach scions in the imperial family. To make them upright and gentle, tolerant and serious, firm but not exacting, simple but not arrogant. The poem expresses what is on the mind intently; song makes language last long; five tones follow long language; six melodies respond to five tones. Eight sounds are in harmony, and the order is not disturbed. Deities and human beings get together peacefully." Kui says, "Alas! I beat and strike the chime stone, and lead hundreds of animals to dance."

帝曰. 夔. 命汝典樂. 教胄子. 直而溫. 寬而栗. 剛而無虐. 簡而無傲. 詩言志. 歌永言. 聲依永. 律和聲. 八音克諧. 無相奪倫. 神人以和. 夔曰. 於. 予擊石拊石. 百獸率舞.⁴

The principle that "the poem expresses what is on the mind intently" is the standard statement in Chinese poetics. Wu Qi elaborates on it in order to broaden the scope of what is on the mind and decrease ethical reference in it. In his view, authors of the "three hundred poems" articulate the sage's *zhi* 志 (what is on the sage's mind, roughly translated as intention), and the sage is the opposite of mediocre people whose talents are so limited that they have to imitate each other. He praises crazy people who have strong aspiration, irascible people who despise the filthy world, and wicked heroes who have insurmountable talents and extreme passion, because he believes that the characteristic of genuine intention is independency. People who deviate from the ethical standard may have their independent intention and articulate their intention independently. Only when poets establish the independent intention can their words become skillful.

⁴ *Shangshu* 尚書, with annotations by Kong Anguo 孔安國 (d.c.100 B.C.) and Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648), in Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764-1849), compiled, *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經注疏. (Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1955), 3.46.

In the interpretation of the passage, Wu Qi articulates a basic method in criticism, to trace back to what is on the writer's mind, and juxtaposes a critic's accomplishment with a poet's accomplishment.

Confucius says, "Poems serve to stir the mind." This is the accomplishment of those who write poems. Later critics who discuss poems can do good job if they trace back to what is originally on the writer's mind. After the critics get what is originally on the writer's mind can they understand the words. They understand the writer and consider the age when the writer lived, and connect with what is originally on the ancient writer's mind without any gap. Confucius says, "It is by the poems that the mind is stirred." This is the accomplishment of those who discuss poems.

子曰：詩可以興。此作詩者之功也。後之論詩者，貴能逆志。既得其志，斯知其言。知人論世，通古人之志于無間者。子曰：興於詩。此論詩者之功也。(1.6)

According to the annotation of the *Analects*, that "it is by the poems that the mind is stirred" means that one's self cultivation should begin with reading poems.⁵ Thus Wu Qi's point is that critics' discussions can facilitate readers' self cultivation. The principle of tracing back to what is on the writer's mind, and knowing the person and considering the age when he lived both come from *Mencius*. The principle of tracing back to what is on the writer's mind is in the following passage cited by Wu Qi.

Hsien-ch'iu Meng said, "I have accepted your declaration that the Sage-King Shun did not consider Yao [who abdicated the throne in favor of Shun] to be his subject. Yet there is a poem in the *Book of Songs*: Of all that is under Heaven, no place is not the king's land; and to the farthest shores of all the land, no man is not the king's subject. I would like to ask how it could be that, when Shun became emperor, the Blind Old Man [Shun's father] would not be considered his subject?" Mencius replied, "This poem is not talking about that. Rather the poem concerns the inability to care for one's parents when laboring in the king's business. It says, 'Everything is the king's business [and should be a responsibility shared by all], yet I [alone] labor here virtuously.' In explaining the poems of the *Book of Songs*, one must not permit the literary patterning to affect adversely [the understanding of] the statement; and one must not permit [our understanding of] the statement to affect adversely [our understanding of] what was on the writer's mind. We use our understanding to trace it back to what was

⁵ Chapter "Taibo" 泰伯, in *Lunyu zhushu* 論語注疏, with annotations by He Yan 何晏 (ca. 190-249) and Xing Bing 邢昺 (932-1010), in *Shisanjing zhushu*, 8.71 (hereafter *Lunyu zhushu*).

[originally] in the writer's mind---this is how to grasp it".⁶ The poem "Galaxy" says, "Among commoners left at the Zhou reign, no one survived." If we believe it, then there was no survival in the Zhou.

咸丘蒙曰：舜之不臣堯，則吾既得聞命矣。詩雲：普天之下，莫非王土；率土之濱，莫非王臣。⁷而舜既為天子矣，敢問瞽瞍之非臣，如何？曰：是詩也，非是之謂也；勞於王事，而不得養父母也。曰：此莫非王事，我獨賢勞也。故說詩者，不以文害辭，不以辭害志。以意逆志，是為得之。如以辭而已矣，雲漢之詩曰：周餘黎民，靡有孑遺。信斯言也，是周無遺民也。⁸

Wu Qi's interpretation of this passage is as follows.

Poetry has the outside and inside. That appearing in the outside is called the literary pattering and statement; that reserved in the inside is called what is on the mind and concept. Both the word concept and word thought in "no depraved thoughts" come from what is on the mind, but there is distinction between them. Thought emphasizes the aspect of painstaking effort, while concept emphasizes the aspect of enjoying oneself to the full. Then we should hold on our mind what is on the ancients' mind, and regard as our concept the ancients' concept. That is why poems in *Wenxuan* often use "on an ancient mood" as the title. Confucian scholars in the Han and Song Dynasties ascribe what is on the mind to the ancients, while regard the concept as their own concept. I am not the ancient, but use my own concept to explain the ancient, then my idea will not be much better than Xianqiu Meng's. These scholars do not know that what is on the mind is concerns in the ancients' heart. The ancients use the concept as a carriage, carrying what is on the mind to travel. They either have the direction, or do not have the direction. The place where the concept reaches is the place where what is on the mind arrives. Therefore to use the ancients' concept to pursue what is on the ancients' mind is to discuss poetry dependent on the poetry, it is the same as to use people to control people. To take this poem as an example to discuss my method. The inability to care for one's parents is what is on the writer's mind; such words as "all under Heaven" are the literary pattering and statement. That "everything is the king's business, yet I alone labor here virtuously" is the concept. The statement affects adversely the understanding, but the concept does not affect adversely the understanding. Therefore to use the concept to trace back to what is on the mind, we can get caring for one's parents as what is on the writer's mind. ... Further I extend the method to explain other works. In Qu Yuan's "Li Sao,"... the concept seems to be in drunkenness and dream. he suddenly ascends to the sky; suddenly falls to the earth; suddenly goes to the east, west, south, and north; suddenly he travels solemnly in the antiquity; suddenly he dissolutely merges in the filthy world. His concept is often swept along out of control, but what is on his mind does not go astray. With one look I know it is from the person who is loyal to the ruler and loves the state. His literary patterning has fragrant grasses, and his statement is lodged in

⁶ Translation is from Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard Asia Center Press, 1992), 24 (hereafter *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*).

⁷ "North Mountain" 北山 in the "Lesser Odes," see *Maoshi zhengyi* 毛詩正義, with annotations by Mao Heng 毛亨, Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200), Lu Deming 陸德明 (ca.550-630) and Kong Yingda, in *Shisanjing zhushu*, 13.444 (hereafter *Maoshi zhengyi*).

⁸ Chapter "Wanzhang" 萬章, in *Mengzi zhushu* 孟子注疏, with annotations by Zhao Qi 趙岐 (108-201), in *Shisanjing zhushu* (Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 9.164 (hereafter *Mengzi zhushu*).

Xi and *Xie*. It is not necessary to deeply explore their meanings. It is enough to get loyalty and patriotism on his mind. Nevertheless, the method of explaining what is on the writer's mind connects with knowing the writer and considering the age when he lived. Therefore, as for poems by Ruan Ji and Lu Ji in *Wenxuan*, most readers do not understand what is on their minds; because I understand their poems corresponding to the concept of Sao, I articulate the honest and frank intention on their minds. What is on Tao Yuanming's mind has long been clear to the world. Because I understand that he gets the sage's concept of wanting to establish and develop himself, I further explore his intention of aiding the broad world on his mind. ...

One must not permit the literary patterning to affect adversely [the understanding of] the statement. This speaks to those who explain poems, not to those who write poems. The literary patterning of one word is enough to affect adversely the statement in one sentence. Here we can get the method of refining words. O One must not permit [our understanding of] the statement to affect adversely [our understanding of] what was on the writer's mind. This also speaks to those who explain poems. The statement in one sentence is enough to affect adversely the concept in one piece. So polishing sentence should be skillful. However, there is nothing more than the method of refining words. If words are refined to be startling, the sentence is naturally energetic.

詩有內有外。顯于外者曰文曰辭，蘊於內者曰志曰意。此意字與思無邪思字皆出於志，然有辨。思就其慘澹經營言之，意就其淋漓盡興言之，則志古人之志而意古人之意，故選詩中每每以古意命題是也。漢、宋諸儒以一志字屬古人，而意為自己之意。夫我非古人，而以己意說之，其咸于蒙之見也幾何矣。不知志者古人之心事，以意為輿，載志而游，或有方，或無方，意之所到，即志之所在，故以古人之意求古人之志，乃就詩論詩，猶之以人治人也。即以此詩論之，不得養父母，其志也；普天云云，文辭也。莫非王事，我獨賢勞，其意也。其辭有害，其意無害，故用此意以逆之，而得其志在養親而已。...更推而論之，屈子之騷，...其意如醉如夢，倏爾上，倏爾下，倏爾東西南北，倏爾莊嚴遊太古，倏爾荒淫混濁世。其意多蕩，其志不迷，望而知其出於忠君愛國者。其文擷香草，其辭托兮些，不必深索。但得其忠君愛國之志可耳。然論志之法，通乎論人論世。故選中如阮籍陸機等，人多不亮其志，吾因其詩合騷意，而特表其耿介之志。陶靖節之志，見白於世久矣，吾因其得聖人欲立欲達之意⁹，而進求其康濟之志。.....不以文害辭，此為說詩者言，非為作詩者解也。一字之文，足害一句之辭，於此得煉字之法。.....不以辭害意，亦為說詩者言。一句之辭，足害一篇之意，可見琢句須工。然卻不外煉字之法。字煉得警則句自健耳。(1. 56-57)

Wu Qi makes use of the ambiguity of concept (*yi*) and regards it as belonging to the poet (and the poetry) rather than to the critic. His interpretation is in conflict with conventional interpretations of concept, the fact that he himself has pointed out. Both Zhao Qi 趙岐 (108-201) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), important commentators on *Mencius*, believe that concept belongs

⁹ As for humaneness, you want to establish yourself; then help others to establish themselves. You want to develop yourself; then help others to develop themselves. 夫仁者，己欲立而立人，己欲達而達人。Chapter “Yongye” 雍也, in the *Analects. Lunyu zhushu*, 6. 55.

to the one who explains the poem.¹⁰ Mencius describes the process by which inner becomes outer, the process of manifestation.¹¹ The literary pattern, statement, and what is on the poet's mind constitute a hierarchical system in the process. However, Wu Qi inserts concept in the process and complicates the process. What is on the poet's mind is no longer a single and homogeneous inner part of poetry. On the contrary, there are at least two layers, concept and what is on the poet's mind, that constitute the inner part. He argues that both concept and thought come from what is on the author's mind, while it is the concept that carries what is on the author's mind to travel. In other words, his metaphor of carriage travel¹² means that concept provides what is on the poet's mind with momentum and therefore controls its activity.

Wu Qi's differentiation of concept and what is on the poet's mind is explained in four literary examples. Through these examples we can find that concept has two attributes, both inner and outer. Concept occurs not only in the mind but also in literary form. The first example is "North Mountain" cited in *Mencius*. When Mencius explains the poem, he says, "The poem concerns the inability to care for one's parents when laboring in the king's business" and "Everything is the king's business, yet I alone labor here virtuously." In the context of *Mencius* they both refer to what is on the poet's mind inferred from the literary patterning and statement of the poem. However, Wu Qi believes that the first inference refers to what is on the poet's mind while the second inference refers to the concept. It seems that the difference, if we try to find a reasonable

¹⁰ Zhao Qi says, "By nature, men are not to be wide apart. Use one's own concept to trace back to what is on the poet's mind. It is to get the essence in the poem." 人情不遠, 以己之意逆詩人之志, 是為得其實矣。See *Mengzi zhushu*, 9. 164. Zhu Xi says, "One should use one's own concept to greet what is on the author's mind. Then one can get it." 當以己意迎取作者之志, 乃可得之。See *Mengzi zhangju* 孟子章句, in *Dianjiao sishu zhangju jizhu* 點校四書章句集注 (Taipei: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 9.306. It is also the interpretation followed by the translation in *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*.

¹¹ *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 25.

¹² Zhou Yukai 周裕鍇 says that the metaphor follows literary terms in the Wei 魏 and Jin 晉. His suggestion seems quite reasonable, but I cannot find the source of the metaphor. Zhou Yukai, "Yiyi nizhi xinshi" 以意逆志新釋, in *Wenyi lilun yanjiu* 文藝理論研究 (2002.6): 74 (hereafter Zhou Yukai).

explanation for Wu Qi, lies in the fact that the first one is more implicit than the second one and represents a higher hermeneutic level. The other possible explanation requires us to return to the poem itself. After lines “Of all that is under Heaven, no place is not the king’s land; and to the farthest shores of all the land, no man is not the king’s subject” cited in *Mencius*, the poem reads, “But the dignitaries are iniquitous, I alone, in my attending to the service, am virtuous”¹³ 大夫不均，我從事獨賢。 The lines here correspond to Mencius’ second inference. Thus in Wu Qi’s view, concept may lie in the literary language itself.¹⁴ Rather than differentiating the literary patterning and statement into two stages as in the original text of *Mencius*, he adds concept as a stage in the literary language as opposed to the literary patterning and statement, now conflated as one.

The second example seems to show that concept mediates between what is on the poet’s mind and literary language. Wu Qi describes the concept in “Li Sao” as drunk, dreamy, and licentious. To define these descriptive terms, he uses rhetorical parallelisms that pick particular details from “Li Sao.” Thus, the concept would be “an interpretive relation of sensory data,” and “the general category deduced from the particular.”¹⁵ In poetry, concept is the general category that can be directly deduced from literary language. What is on the poet’s mind should be inferred from the concept, but it does not mean that the concept and what is on the poet’s mind should be in harmony. The concept in “Li Sao” is swept along out of control, as Wu Qi points out, however, what is on the poet’s mind does not go astray.

The third example is poetry by Ruan Ji and Lu Ji 陸機 (261-303). Wu Qi uses a term “concept

¹³ Translation is from Bernhard Karlgren, *The Book of Odes: Chinese Text, Transcription and Translation* (Stockholm: The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1950), 158, with modification.

¹⁴ This explanation is just my conjecture. In fact, the poem also says, “I am worried about my parents” 憂我父母。 Then can we say that what is on the poet’s mind also lies in literary language?

¹⁵ *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 594.

of Sao” (*saoyi*) to describe the concept in their poetry, and argues that from the concept of Sao honest and frank intention can be inferred. The concept of Sao in fact refers to an established poetic style and a particular personality (as mentioned above in Sao writers). Earlier in this item, Wu Qi refers to a term “ancient mood” (*guyi* 古意) to describe a poetic subgenre¹⁶: “Then we should hold in our mind what is on the ancients’ mind, and regard as our concept the ancients’ concept. That is why poems in *Wenxuan* often use ‘an ancient mood’ as the title.” *Saoyi* itself is a kind of *guyi*; it is that Ruan Ji and Lu Ji regard the concept in Li Sao as their own concept. It might be difficult for critics, both modern and pre-modern, to agree with Wu Qi that the *yi* in both *saoyi* and *guyi* is the same as the *yi* in *yi yin zhi* 以意逆志. However, he unifies different usages of *yi* by tracing back to the psychological and literary situation of the ancients.

The fourth example is Tao Yuanming’s 陶淵明 (365?-427) poetry. Wu Qi argues that Tao’s mind of being a recluse is clear to readers, but what is on Tao’s mind has multiple sides. The intention of aiding the broad world is also on his mind. Different from the relationship of *yi* and *zhi* represented in “Li Sao,” here the concept of wanting to establish and develop himself harmonizes with what is on his mind, however, the repetition almost makes the differentiation of *yi* and *zhi* meaningless.¹⁷

Finally, Wu Qi shows his attention to refining words: one word determines one sentence, and one sentence determines the whole piece. This belief shows clearly in his critical practice in the third part. His interpretation of poems often focuses on one word, because in his view that the

¹⁶ *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 594. In this case, *yi* is very broadly used as ‘the way someone thinks of things.’”

¹⁷ Wu Qi’s differentiation of *yi* and *zhi* is vulnerable to the criticism that in the time of Mencius there is no difference of meaning between *yi* and *zhi*. See Zhou Yukai, 74. Wu Qi’s differentiation makes sense in modern Chinese: we can say *saoyi*, but to say *saozhi* 騷志 is awkward. However, the term *saoyi* appears only after the Song dynasty.

whole piece has the force to stick to this word.

The other principle of knowing person and considering the age when he lived is as follows.

Mencius said to Wan-chang, “A good shih in one small community will befriend the other good shih of that community. The good shih of a single state will befriend the other good shih of that state. The good shih of the whole world will befriend the other good shih of the whole world. But if befriending the good shih of the whole world is not enough, then one may go on further to consider the ancients. Yet is it acceptable to recite their poems and read their books without knowing what kind of persons they were? Therefore one considers the age in which they lived. This is ‘going on further to make friends.’”¹⁸

孟子謂萬章曰：一鄉之善士，斯友一鄉之善士；一國之善士，斯友一國之善士；天下之善士，斯友天下之善士。以友天下之善士為未足，又尚論古之人。頌其詩，讀其書，不知其人，可乎？是以論其世也，是尚友也。¹⁹

Wu Qi’s interpretation is as follows.

When the word *shi* appears in works, it has two meanings. Explained in a vertical way, it means changes of ages. The antiquity is based on the accumulation of time. Explained in a horizontal way, it means the world. All under Heaven is based on the accumulation of people. I cannot connect with the ancients, and it is the result of the accumulated time. However, there is something that connects the ancients with I, and it is the ancients’ poems and books. The ancients have poems and books, so the ancients reveal themselves in poems and books to wait for my understanding. I recite poems and read books, so they let me use the understanding in them to trace back to the ancients in distance. This is why we cannot just recite poems, but we should also consider what kind of persons they were. However, why should we consider the age in which they lived before we consider what kind of persons they were? If the world where we were born did not have many people, or had many people all of whom were good noblemen, indeed there was no difference among people, how would partial faction appear; there was also no love or hatred, how would slander and ridicule rise? How pitiful that there are all kinds of people born into the world together with me. Then there has to be a lot of attacks and seizures. Therefore, people defend those in the same faction and attack those in different factions, conflicting with each other, and the situation that would never change is established. For noble persons born into this world, if they intend to struggle with the situation, they are incapable to do it, and if they intend not to struggle with it, it is also impossible. They cannot reach the true nature, so their consideration cannot but be deep and their mind cannot but be precarious. Therefore, persons are certainly correlated to the age and world. Nevertheless, I cannot use my age and world to consider the ancients’ age and world. It is because the ancients had their own age and world. “The resentment has not been eradicated.” This is King Wen’s age and world. “I anger a group of petty men.” This is Confucius’ age and world. If we do not consider what kind of age and world the ancients lived, how can we know what kind of persons they were? My principle of reading *Wenxuan* poems follow it. I follow

¹⁸ *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 34.

¹⁹ Chapter “Wanzhang,” in *Mengzi zhushu*, 10.188.

the principle of knowing persons to write biographies for poets in the six dynasties, and the principle of considering the age to write the chronology for them.

世字見於文有二義。縱言之曰世運，積時而成古。橫言之曰世界，積人而成天下也。我與古人不相及者，積時使然。然有相及者，古人之詩書在焉。古人有詩書，是古人懸以其人待知於我。我有誦讀，使我遙以其知逆于古人。是不得徒誦其詩，當論其人。然論其人，必先論其世者何也。使生乎天之下，或無多人，或多人而皆善士，固無有同異也，偏党何由而生。亦無愛憎也，讒譏何由而起。無奈天下之共我而生者，林林總總爾，攻取不得不繁。於是黨同伐異，相傾相軋，遂成一牢不可破之局。君子生當此世，欲爭之而不得，欲不爭而又不獲已。不能直達其性，則慮不得不深，心不得不危。故人必與世相關也。然未可以我之世例之。蓋古人自有古人之世也。不殄厥愠²⁰，文王之世也。慍於群小²¹，孔子之世也。²²苟不論其世為何世，安知其人為何如人乎。余之讀選詩，義取諸此。其六朝詩人列傳仿知人而作，六朝詩人紀年又因論世而起云。(1.59-60)

Wu Qi's poetic view seems to follow the conventional statement that grievance creates poetry.²³

In another item, he articulates a similar idea, "None of the ancients' poems is not from grieved heart" 古人之詩. 無不出於憂心者. (1.63) Wu Qi's tone is highly emotional when he makes a generalization that noble persons are always frustrated in the world full of people not like themselves. Wu Qi seems to project his anxiety ("intently on his own mind") of the world full of conflict and struggle onto the ancients. Though he argues that each age and world is unique, in his view the basic similarity in all ages and worlds is that noble persons are in straits.

Wu Qi is interested in showing sympathy with the ancients through psychological analysis. In the following item, Wu Qi explains comparison and contrast as a method to interpret the ancients' poems. In this item, psychological analysis plays an important role.

Gongsun Chou asked about an opinion of the scholar Gao, saying, "Gao observed, 'The Xiao Pan is the ode of a petty man.'" Mencius asked, "Why did he say so?" "Because of the grievance," was the reply. Mencius answered, "How stubborn was that old Gao in dealing with the ode! There is a man here, and a native of Yue bends his bow to shoot him. I will advise not

²⁰ "Mian" 綿, in "King Wen" 文王 in "Greater Odes" (Da Ya 大雅), *Maoshi zhengyi*, 16.550.

²¹ "Cypress Boat" 柏舟, in the "Airs of Bei" 邶風, see *Maoshi zhengyi*, 2. 75.

²² Wu Qi's interpretation of these two poems follows that in *Mencius. Mengzi zhushu*, 14. 252.

²³ Qian Zhongshu 錢鐘書, "Shi keyi yuan" 詩可以怨, in *Qizhui ji* 七綴集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985), 119-136.

to do so, but speaking calmly and smilingly;---for no other reason but that he is not related to me. But if my own brother be bending his bow to shoot the man, then I will advise him not to do so, weeping and crying the while;---for no other reason than that he is related to me. The grievance expressed in the Xiao Pan is the working of affection to relatives. Affection to relatives shows humanness. Stubborn indeed was old Gao's criticism on the ode." Chou then said, "How is it that there is no grievance expressed in the Kai Feng?" Mencius replied, "The parent's fault referred to in the Kai Feng is small; that referred to in the Xiao Pan is great. Where the parent's fault was great, not to have grieved on account of it would have increased the want of natural affection. Where the parent's fault was small, to have grieved on account of it would have been to be angered by a small stir. To increase the want of natural affection would have been unfilial, and to be angered by a small stir would also have been unfilial."²⁴

公孫醜問曰：高子曰：小弁，小人之詩也。孟子曰：何以言之？曰：怨。曰：固哉，高叟之為詩也！有人於此，越人關弓而射之，則已談笑而道之；無他，疏之也。其兄關弓而射之，則已垂涕泣而道之；無他，戚之也。小弁之怨，親親也。親親，仁也。固矣夫，高叟之為詩也！曰：凱風何以不怨？曰：凱風，親之過小者也；小弁，親之過大者也。親之過大而不怨，是愈疏也；親之過小而怨，是不可磯也。愈疏，不孝也；不可磯，亦不孝也。孔子曰：舜其至孝矣，五十而慕。²⁵

Whenever the ancients write poems, not only is the mind is profound, but words where they lodge mind are also abstruse. Later scholars cannot understand all of them, so they often borrow the author's other poems as reference, and borrow other authors' poems as reference or contrast. Then can they understand the author's concept. This passage borrows the poem "Pleasant Wind" in the "Airs" to explain "Xiao Pan" in the "Lesser Odes." It is also one way to explain poetry. Moreover, poems in the six dynasties are unified by one way of the Han Dynasty. Authors follow their predecessors successively, and there is one vein through those in the front and in the back. Some intend to inherit former authors' beautiful writing; some intend to depart from former authors and contend with them; and some further intend to stride over former authors and be above them. Therefore when they grasp the brush and draw a mental outline, they either avoid repeating former authors or deliberately repeat them²⁶; either enlarge former authors' concept, or fill their omission, or reverse what formers authors have said. Everywhere there is implicit counterpart on the tiniest points. Not only are poems of imitation and calling to the recluse in this way. Not to mention those poems written by one author. For instance, as for Pan Yue's two poems of Henyang county and Lu Ji's poems of going to Luoyang, though they are written in different times, they can also reflect each other in distance and become reference for each other.

²⁴ Translation is from James Legge, *The Chinese Classics* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), 2. 426-428, with modifications (hereafter James Legge).

²⁵ "Gaozi" 告子 in *Mencius*, see *Mengzi zhangju*, 12.340.

²⁶ Notice the similarity of idea and words between here and novel commentary. In "Method of Reading *Three Kingdoms*" 讀三國志法, Mao Lun 毛綸 (seventeenth century) and Mao Zonggang 毛宗崗 (1632-?) say, "the book *Three Kingdoms* has wonders of different branches on the same tree, different leaves on the same branch, different flowers from the same leave, and different fruits from the same flower. The skill of a writer is to be good at avoiding what is written, and also to be good at deliberately repeating what is written." See *Sanguozhi yanyi* 三國志演義, with commentary by Mao Lun and Mao Zonggang (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), 1. 22.

凡古人作詩，其操心既深，其托詞複奧。後之學者，不能遽通。往往借其人之他詩互相參；及借他人之詩互相參，或反相照，始能心知其意。是篇借風之凱風，以形小雅之小弁，是亦說詩之一道也。況六朝之詩，總一漢道，作者遞相祖述，前後一脈相承。或欲繼美，或欲分偏鼎峙，或更欲跨而上之。故其捫管鉤思，或避或犯，或廣其意，或補其缺，或翻其案，莫不暗暗針芥相對處。選中不獨擬詩及招隱等詩為然也。況夫出於一手者。如潘之二縣，陸之赴洛，雖作不同時，亦皆遙相照映，俱可互相參證云。(1.62-63)

The passage quoted from *Mencius* is about comparative explanations of two poems, which articulate that whether a poem should show grievance depends on the specific circumstance. Wu Qi picks the point and then begins to discuss a different kind of comparison, the succession and antagonism among poems in the six dynasties, which are said to represent the spirit of the Han Dynasty. Part of his description may fit the term anxiety of influence. He believes that poets are conscious of the existence of their predecessors, and mobilize psychological defenses intensely. His description is based on psychological analysis of poets. Psychological analysis resorts to immanent changes of poems rather than historical contextualism²⁷ represented in knowing person and considering the age. This item explains one characteristic in Wu Qi's critical practice: to interpret poems by comparison.

In the following item, Wu Qi goes forward to articulate that he understands the ancients in terms of his own cares.

Gongsun Chou said, "It is said, in the *Book of Poetry*, 'He will not eat the bread of idleness!' How is it that we see superior men eating without laboring?" Mencius replied, "When a superior man resides in a country, if its sovereign employs his counsels, he comes to tranquility, wealth, honor, and glory. If the young in it follow his instructions, they become filial, obedient to their elders, true-hearted, and faithful. What greater example can there be than this of not eating the bread of idleness?"²⁸

公孫丑曰。詩曰。不素餐兮。²⁹君子之不耕而食何也。孟子曰。君子居是國也。其君用之。則安富尊榮。

²⁷ Two basic ways of explaining literary change are historical contextualism and immanent change. To assume that writers intend to produce works unlike those of previous writers is a characteristic of theories of immanent change. See David Perkins, *Is Literary History Possible* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 153-173.

²⁸ James Legge, 2. 467-468.

²⁹ "Chopping Sandalwood" 伐檀, in the "Airs of Wei" 魏風, *Maoshi zhengyi*, 5.210.

其子弟從之。則孝悌忠信。不素餐兮。孰大於是。³⁰

Poetry writes the actual world that the ancients experienced. If we do not encounter their events, visit their places, witness their scene and things, and only follow our ear and chest to make conjectures, it is just to guess the answer to a riddle, and it cannot be called as explaining poetry. Though this passage discusses poetry, it is not written because of difficulty of understanding in poetry. It is that in his mind he has long been touched by events of getting sustenance from princes, so he makes use of the poem as a pretext. It is the same as that Zigong originally asks about the ruler of Wei while lodges his words in Boyi and Shuqi. Mencius understands Gongsun Chou's conception, so he directly explains it in terms of his way of dealing with the world, and his explanation just corresponds to the original poem. We can see that the way to explain poetry is not rigid. If we can get the basic concept that lies in the ancients' poems, it is all right to explain them either in terms of our way of dealing with the world or cares in our inner mind.

詩者，古人閱歷之實境。苟非親遇其事，履其地，目睹其景若物，而任耳任臆，只是猜謎，不謂解詩。此篇雖是論詩，然卻不為於詩有所疑難而發。乃其胸中久感傳食諸侯云云之事，假此為端。如子貢本問衛君而托詞于夷齊然³¹。孟子知其意，故直以己之行事解之，卻與原詩吻合。可見解詩無死法。能得其大意所存，即以己之行事解古人之詩可，或以己之心事解古人之詩亦可。(1.60-61)

Here Wu Qi undermines his previous argument that *yi* should belong to a poet rather than a critic.

We can find that Wu Qi does not insist on systematic thinking, and contradiction is not the thing he wants to avoid. Wu Qi points out that both Gongsun Chou and Mencius hold considerations beyond the poem under discussion, however, he believes that the consideration based on a specific individual circumstance might point to the right poetic interpretation. Mencius not only uses his own concept to trace back to what is in the ancient's mind, according to Wu Qi's interpretation, Mencius even goes so far as to transform the poem as a vehicle of expressing his own cares. This is exactly "to grab another person's cup to pour on my own pent-up feeling" 奪

³⁰ The chapter "Jinxin" 盡心, see *Mengzi zhushu*, 13. 240.

³¹ In the chapter "Shu'er" 述而, Zigong wants to know if Confucius will serve the ruler of Wei, so he asks Confucius what sort of men Boyi and Shuqi are and if they harbor grievance. Confucius answers that they pursue humaneness and get it, why should they harbor grievance? Thus Zigong understands that Confucius will not serve the ruler of Wei. See *Lunyu zhushu*, 7.62.

他人之酒杯，澆自己之壘塊。³² In Wu Qi's view, to explain the ancients' poems requires critics to repeat the ancients' living experience. Since it is impossible to achieve this goal, explaining poems easily falls in a trap of guessing riddles. However, if a critic is flexible to explain poems in terms of his own experience and concern, coincidentally the explanation might match the basic concept in poems. This principle might explain why Wu Qi does not avoid over-interpretation in his critical practice.

In the following item Wu Qi further develops the point that the explanation that does not depend on the poem itself (in his own phrase *jiushilunshi* 就詩論詩) might match the poem well, and points out that even misreading can create positive influence.

It is said, in the *Book of Poetry*, "My heart is disquieted and grieved, I am hated by the crowd of mean creatures." This might say about Confucius. And again, "Though he did not remove their wrath, he did not let fall his own fame." This might say about King Wen.³³
憂心悄悄，慍於群小。孔子也。肆不殄厥慍，亦不隕厥問。文王也。³⁴

"Cypress Boat" is originally about Jiang of Qi, but Mencius' comment forcedly inserts Confucius in it. The chapter Mian is originally about the Great King [King Wen's grand father], but the comment forcedly inserts King Wen in it. Since the comment comes out, it has made us believe that two poems are indeed about two sages, and cannot be changed. This is the divine transformation by the one who explains poems. Knowing this principle, then we do not have to ask what poems are by Su Wu and Li Ling, as long as Su and Li are there. We do not have to ask who are authors of Nineteen Old Poems, as long as poems are there. Why? Even though the pieces on the river bridge are later people's imitation, this fact does not prevent them becoming poems by Su and Li. Since Nineteen Old Poems are in harmony with the principle of poems in the "Airs" in the *Classic of Poetry*, it is all right to regard either Mei Sheng or Fu Yi as their author. Even though you choose another ancient writer to be their author, it is also all right.

柏舟本其(齊)薑之詩，而硬插作孔子。³⁵綿之章，本太王之詩，而硬插作文王。³⁶自此論一出，

³² This is Li Zhi's 李贄 (1527-1602) statement in *A Book to Burn* 焚書, cited in Guo Shaoyu 郭紹虞, ed., *Zhongguo lidai wenlunxuan* 中國歷代文論選 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1979), 3.121. Li Zhi means that drama writers can relieve their own indignation by writing others' stories. Here Wu Qi talks about the similarity privilege, but the subject is a critic rather than a writer.

³³ James Legge, 2. 486, with modifications.

³⁴ Chapter "Jinxin," *Mengzi zhushu*, 14. 252.

³⁵ Mao commentary says that the poem means that humane men are not recognized because petty men are at the side of Duke Qing of Wei 衛頃公. Wu Qi seems to follow the interpretation of "Three Schools" which says that Qijiang,

遂覺二詩恰是二聖人之詩，確不可移。此說詩者之神化也。知此則有蘇李之人，不必更問其詩。有十九首詩，不必更求其人。何也？河梁數首，即出後人所擬，亦不礙其為蘇李之詩。而十九首既合風詩之旨，以為枚乘可，以為傅毅可。即別任取一古人當之，亦無不可。(1.63)

The passage Wu Qi cites is Mencius' explanation of two poems in the *Classic of Poetry*, which he also cites in the item of knowing person and considering the age in order to show the age and world of Confucius and the King Wen. Now he points out that the explanation is in fact wrong, thus we can find that in his view the plausible recognition of the age and world is not determined by historical facts. Here Wu Qi calls creative misattribution as divine transformation. Mencius' misattribution influences later readers' acceptance of the poems; the misattribution is eternalized and appreciated, because Mencius explains what the poems should write rather than what they actually write. Further, Wu Qi develops the point of what the poems should write to the point of who the author should be. Poems conventionally attributed to Su Wu and Li Ling should be written by Su and Li, even though they are later writers' imitation (*ni*)³⁷. To read them against the background of Su Wu's and Li Ling's stories is aesthetically desirable, though it is not supported by historical or philological research. Because Nineteen Old Poems echo poems by anonymous writers in the "Airs," their writers should be also anonymous.³⁸ In Wu Qi's view, the divine transformation of critics is to situate poems in an interpretative frame that meets aesthetic pleasure and the expectation of literary convention. Here we can see that Wu Qi endows on

wife of Duke Xuan of Wei 衛宣公, refuses to remarry. See Wang Xianqian 王先謙 (1842-1917), ed., *Shi sanjia yi jishu* 詩三家義集疏 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 126.

³⁶ Here Wu Qi seems to follow Zhu Xi's commentary. Zhu Xi says that the original meaning of "Cypress Boat" is that the noble person angers petty men, and the original meaning of "King Wen" is that though the Great King cannot prevent his brothers from resenting him, his good reputation is not affected. However, Zhu Xi believes that Mencius' interpretation that the first poem refers to Confucius and the second one refers to King Wen also makes sense. See *Mengzi zhangju*, 14. 368.

³⁷ Probably it is more accurate to say they are persona poems (*dai* 代).

³⁸ "Authorship, which is usually a positive value, is an unwanted attribute for an anonymous 'old poem' or *yuefu*." See Stephen Owen, *The Making of Early Chinese Classical Poetry* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 217.

critics great power of shaping and transforming the interpretation and acceptance of poetry.

Echoing the term divine transformation, Wu Qi borrows a similar term enlightenment 妙悟 from Yan Yu's 嚴羽 (13th century) *Canglang's Remarks on Poetry* 滄浪詩話.³⁹

Zixia asked, saying, "What is the meaning of the passage---'How pretty dimples of her artful smile! The well-defined black and white of her eye! The plain ground for the colors?'" The master said, "The business of laying on the colors follows (the preparation of) the plain ground." Zixia said, "Ceremonies then are a subsequent thing?" The master said, "It is Shang who can bring out my meaning. Now I can begin to talk about the odes with him."⁴⁰

子夏問曰。巧笑倩兮。美目盼兮。素以為絢兮。⁴¹何謂也。子曰。繪事後素。曰。禮後乎。子曰。起予者商也。始可與言詩已矣。⁴²

When former poets write poetry, they value enlightenment. Moreover, explaining poetry also values enlightenment.... For instance, the poem of plain ground and colors itself only chants a stately lady's appearance, how can it have anything to do with painting? However, the master explains it in terms of painting. How can it have anything to do with ceremonies? However, Zixia is enlightened to think of ceremonies as a subsequent thing. This is especially a so-called fully penetrating enlightenment.

昔人為詩，貴於妙悟，而論詩亦然。... 如素絢之詩，自詠碩人之容顏耳，何與於繪事，而夫子解以繪。何與於禮事，而子夏悟及禮後，尤所謂透徹之悟。(1. 37)

The passage Wu Qi cites is Confucius' and his disciple's interpretations of a poem in the *Classic of Poetry*. Regardless of the specific import and circumstance of the poem, they draw ethical lesson through free association. Wu Qi grafts Confucius' metaphorical interpretation onto Yan Yu's analogy of poetry to Chan Buddhism. In his view, critics, just like poets, need intuitive understanding.

The following two passages quoted are from the chapter "Zhongyong" 中庸 in *Liji* 禮記, later annotated by Zhu Xi and included in Four Books as Daoxue classics.

³⁹ Guo Shaoyu 郭紹虞, *Canglang shihua jiaoshi* 滄浪詩話校釋 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1961), 12.

⁴⁰ James Legge, 1. 157.

⁴¹ "The Stately Lady" 碩人 in the "Airs of Wei" 衛風, *Maoshi zhengyi*, 3. 129. The third line is not in the original poem.

⁴² The chapter "Bayi" 八佾, in *Lunyu zhushu*, 3.26-27.

It is said in the Book of Poetry, “The ordinances of Heaven, how profound are they and unceasing!” The meaning is, that it is thus that Heaven is Heaven. And again, “How illustrious was it, the singleness of the virtue of king Wen!” indicating that it was thus that king Wen was what he was. Singleness likewise is unceasing.⁴³

詩云：維天之命，於穆不已！蓋曰天之所以為天也。於乎不顯！文王之德之純！⁴⁴蓋曰文王之所以為文也，純亦不已。⁴⁵

Unceasing can be used to express Heaven rather than people. Singleness can be used to express people rather than Heaven. Here only one word “likewise” is used to connect two. Then we feel that Heaven can also be expressed as singleness, and people can also be expressed as unceasing. If the person who explains the poems has such enlightenment, he naturally has such power in brush.

不已可以言天而不可言人。純可以言人而不可言天。此只用一亦字黏合，遂覺天亦可言純，人亦可言不已。說詩有此妙悟，自有此筆力。(1.65)

Here enlightenment partly means novelty in the association of words. An adjective is used in an unexpected position to describe a noun that is supposed to be described by a different adjective.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, “The hawk flies up to heaven; the fishes leap in the deep.”⁴⁶ This expresses that the Way is manifest everywhere.

詩云：鳶飛戾天。魚躍於淵。⁴⁷言其上下察也。⁴⁸

The poem itself just chants about hawk and fish. How can it have anything to do with *Daoxue*? Zisi cites it because he thinks it illustrates becoming a recluse when the Way is lost. When he says “the Way is manifest everywhere”, this is the enlightenment of the one who explains the poem. Master Cheng further uses it to prove to be cautious. To say not to force the cultivation means the enlightenment of the one who explains the person who explains the poem. The argument seems to be farther from the poem when it is farther deduced, but in fact when it is farther, it is closer. O This is Chan Buddhism. It is the same that ancients use Disciplines in Chan Buddhism to make an analogy for poetry, and esteem as the first rate those literati who are endowed with cause and consequence of Prajna.

詩自詠鳶魚耳，何與道學事。子思引以為證費隱。而曰上下察，是論詩者之妙悟。程子複以證戒慎。曰勿忘助，是論論詩者之妙悟。其論似愈推而愈遠，實彌遠而彌近矣。……此禪機也。古人以禪乘喻詩，奉慧業文人為最上乘者是也。(1.64-65)

⁴³ James Legge, 1.421.

⁴⁴ “Remembering Heaven’s Order” 維天之命, in “Clear Temple” 清廟, in “Zhou Hymn” 周頌, *Maoshi zhengyi*, 19.708.

⁴⁵ “Zhongyong zhangju,” (Mean by Chapter and Phrase 中庸章句), in *Dianjiao sishu zhangju jizhu*, 35.

⁴⁶ The translation is from James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1. 392-393.

⁴⁷ “The Foot of the Mount Han” 旱麓, in the “Greater Odes,” *Maoshi zhengyi*, 16.560.

⁴⁸ “Zhongyong zhangju,” 22.

In Wu Qi's view, both Zisi and the master Cheng become literary critics. He believes that poetic criticism and classical interpretation coincide in drawing intuitive thoughts that seem to be irrelevant to the poem. In his mind, Chan intelligence seems to mean paradox: the interpretation irrelevant to the poem actually sticks to the point.

Concept of Literary History and Retrospective Criticism

Wu Qi's concept of literary history might easily attract modern scholars who look for systematic thoughts in classical Chinese literary criticism.⁴⁹ He argues that among former literary critics only Zhong Rong and Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 (1551-1602) know the origin and ramification of poetry from the ancient to the present, and that he follows these two predecessors in recognizing poetic history comprehensively. He uses a term era to describe three periods in Chinese literary history. Three hundred poems represent the first era; *Wenxuan* poems represent the second era; "new style verses" in the Tang dynasty and after the Tang represent the third era. He borrows a term "way of Han Dynasty" 漢道 from a couplet "Alas! The poets of Sao have disappeared, and the way of Han Dynasty is flourishing here" 騷人嗟不見, 漢道盛於斯 in Du Fu's poem "Written Accidentally" 偶題,⁵⁰ and uses it to unify three eras. In some places, Wu Qi seems to use "way of Han Dynasty" to show a spirit and a style, but in one place he defines "way of Han Dynasty" as genres. "The way of Han Dynasty refers to five syllable poetry and seven syllable poetry. Once they flourish in the Han dynasty, and then they flourish in the Tang dynasty" 漢道即指五七言。一

⁴⁹ The only book that I have found discusses *Liuchao xuanshi dinglun* in length is Zhang Jian's 張健 *Qingdai shixue yanjiu* 清代詩學研究. Three pages are devoted to Wu Qi, but only discuss the second volume. Zhang thinks that Wu Qi's value is to articulate a kind of "macrocosmic view of poetic history" 宏觀詩歌史觀. He also points out that Wu Qi's high evaluation of *Wenxuan* poems is influenced by Yunjian 雲間 school represented by Chen Zilong 陳子龍 (1608-1647), and former and latter seven masters 七子 in the Ming Dynasty. See *Qingdai shixue yanjiu* (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999), 229-234.

⁵⁰ Qiu Zhaoao 仇兆鰲 (1638-1713), annotated, *Dushi xiangzhu* 杜詩詳注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 1541.

盛於漢。再盛于唐 (3.7). In Wu Qi's view, *Wenxuan* poems perfectly represent the way of Han; three hundred poems are the origin of the way of Han; “new style verses” 近體 follow the way of Han yet inevitably deviate from it.

Wu Qi's description of three eras is touched by mystical tone. He believes that the fact that Xiao Tong's short life only allows him to select poets before Jiang Yan in the Liang Dynasty is the ordinance of Heaven, so that *Wenxuan* poems can represent the pure way of Han. In his view, poems in the Chen and Sui Dynasties have already become the herald of the third era. He says that compared with poems in the Han, poems in the Chen and Sui add flourishes for effect 踵事增華; and poems in the Tang and after Tang further change from the root and get increasing heavy 變本加厲 (in Wu Qi's vocabulary it does not necessarily carry negative message). He argues that though Tang poems pursue independent development, they cannot totally depart from the way of Han. Also, poems after the Tang cannot step out of the scope of the Tang. Thus Wu Qi's narrative literary history is in fact a conceptual literary history, since it exhibits the interrelation of poems as the logical relations of one idea.⁵¹ In his literary narrative the way of Han Dynasty is the hero that links literary developments in different eras in Chinese history. The way of Han Dynasty experiences climax and decline, and changes almost once every thousand years when one form of poetry has exhausted its capability of development: from Emperor Yu to the Eastern Zhou, there are one thousand years and poetry changes; from the Han to Liang there are one thousand years and poetry changes again. From the Tang to the time he lives there are also about one thousand years. He cannot predict the future of poetry but provides three possibilities: the current poetry would be eternalized to the end; it would change to create a new era; it would turn back to restore the antiquity.

⁵¹ *Is Literary History Possible*, 49.

Many of Wu Qi's evaluations of literary history from the Wei to Liang Dynasties are based on Zhong Rong's *Gradations of Poets* and Liu Xie's 劉勰 (ca.465-522) *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* (*Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍), as in the following instance.

Between the Taikang reign (280-289) and Yuankang reign (291-299) there were three Zhangs, two Lus, a pair of Pans, and a Zuo who burst forth, stood out, and followed the footsteps of the former writers. Though their words are more elaborate than those in the Zhengshi reign (196-220), and power is weaker than that in the Jian'an reign (240-249), they are also the resurgence of the way of Han Dynasty. (2.7)

太康元康之間，三張，二陸，兩潘，一左，勃爾振起，繼武前躅，雖采縟於正始，力柔于建安，然亦漢道之中興也。

In this passage Wu Qi combines a piece from “Preface to *Shipin*” 詩品序 with a piece from the chapter “Clarifying Poetry” 明詩 in *Wenxin diaolong*, and concludes them with his own creation “way of Han Dynasty.” This might be a characteristic of many late Imperial critics, whose arguments are nothing but ramifications in a literary tradition.⁵² Wu Qi's novelty, however, may lie in what he himself disputes. He thinks that when critics after the Tang discuss “new style verse” their comments are insightful, while when they discuss poems in *Wenxuan*, their ideas are not sound. The reason is, he argues, that Tang “new style verse” lies in their mind as an obstruction. Only comments made by Zhong Rong and Liu Xie who live before the Tang get the essence of *Wenxuan* poems, because they only know poems from the Han to Liang Dynasties. Tang poems, with their strong influence, mediate between *Wenxuan* poems and late Imperial critics. Wu Qi himself is a critic who has “new style verse” in his mind and explains *Wenxuan* poems in terms of his knowledge in Tang poems. One extreme example is a statement like this: Xie Tiao is the head of poets in the Qi. His poems are very clear, beautiful, fresh and sharp. Each character is gotten from bitter chanting 齊之詩以謝朓為稱首。其詩極清麗新警。字字得之苦吟。

⁵² Of course, Wu Qi does dispute some arguments made by his predecessors. For instance, he disagrees with Zhong Rong's criticism of Yongming 永明 style. He seems to be an expert in musicology and pays much attention to the relationship between poetry and music. He even says that rhyme is the master in poetry 詩以韻為主。(16.2)

(15.1)

Though Wu Qi regards it unfortunate not to achieve the naiveté Zhong Rong and Liu Xie have, it is his sophistication that helps him produce something new and different from Zhong and Liu. His appropriation of Du Fu's poem to describe literary history implies that a particular Tang retrospect functions in his narrative. Though the center of his narrative is six dynasties, sometimes his standpoint lies in the Tang Dynasty. For instance, he says that the relationship between the Han poetry and Wei poetry is like that between the Early Tang poetry and High Tang poetry. When he argues that in one era there are different shorter periods (*hui* 會), and the Eastern Jin poetry and Wei poetry represent two periods, his reason is that Liu Kun's 劉琨 (271-317/8) poetic style influences Li Bai's 李白 (701-762) powerful and intransigent air 飛揚跋扈之氣, while Guo Pu's 郭璞 (276-324) style influences Du Fu's intoxicating and gloomy thoughts 沉酣抑鬱之思. (2.8) When he discusses how a critic should select contemporary poems, he begins from Tang anthologies and then turns to Han anthologies.

When poems reach the Tang, they were already extremely flourishing. However, apart from *Caidiao ji*, poems in *Yulan*, *Souyu*, and *Qiezhong* are no more than a hundred [each]. The standard of selection is so rigorous. Therefore I am enlightened that Nineteen Old Poems are Han poems selected by Han compliers.

夫詩至唐,已云極盛。而才調集⁵³外,御覽⁵⁴,搜玉⁵⁵,篋中⁵⁶等集,不踰百首,所收固如此之嚴。因悟古詩十九首乃漢人選漢詩也。(2.23)

Though Nineteen Old Poems first appear in *Wenxuan*, Wu Qi seems to be inspired by Tang

⁵³ *Caidiao ji*, 10 volumes, was compiled by Wei Hu 韋縠 in the Five Dynasties. Among extant Tang anthologies, it is the largest one.

⁵⁴ *Yulan shi* 御覽詩, 1 volume, was compiled in 817 by Linghu Chu 令狐楚 (766-837). It contains more than 300 poems, mostly from poets in the Yuanhe reign (806-820) and Dali reign (766-779).

⁵⁵ *Souyu xiaoji* 搜玉小集, 1 volume, probably was compiled in 750s. The compiler is unknown. It contains about 60 Early Tang poems.

⁵⁶ *Qie zhongji*, 1 volume, was compiled by Yuan Jie 元結 (719-772), with a preface dated in 760. It contains 24 poems.

anthologies compiled by Tang people to argue that a group of Nineteen Old Poems is a Han anthology by Han people.

As for the creator of five syllable poetry, Wu Qi believes that Emperor Wu in the Han Dynasty is the real creator. In order to explain why Li Ling and Su Wu are regarded as creators, he provides following analysis that makes an analogy between five-syllable poetry and seven-syllable poetry.

Du Zimei says, “Su Wu and Li Ling are my teachers.” Then how can we say that five-syllable poetry is not created by Su and Li? [Those who raise such an argument] do not realize that he [Du Fu] only used the Su and Li “River bridge” poems because he honored them. At that time, there were many poets, while Su and Li were the best, and the most famous. Therefore later generations regarded them as the first poets of five syllable poetry. It is the same that regulated poetry in the Tang was established by the emperor Wen (Taizong), while later writers regarded Shen Quanqi 沈佺期 (ca.656-714) and Du Shenyan 杜審言 (?648-708) as their teachers. If there was not an established form, when Su and Li parted and held their hands in a hurry, even though Li was good at initiating poems, and Su was good at rhyming with the poems, how could they finish such a great event in a moment?

杜子美曰。李陵蘇武是吾師。⁵⁷ 謂不創于蘇李。可乎。不知蘇李河梁。不過尊而用之耳。當時作者亦眾。而蘇李之詩最佳。蘇李之名最著。故後人引為稱首。即如唐律。本文皇所定。而後之為律者乃引沈杜為師耳。若非有定式。而河梁之別。造次攜手。李即善倡。蘇即善和。寧得一刻之頃而辦此千古大事哉。(2.32)

As early as Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384-456) and Liu Xie, critics have already suspected both the attribution of the river bridge poems to Li and Su, and the attribution of the creator of five syllable poetry to Li Ling.⁵⁸ Wu Qi accepts the suspicion, but just as he suggests that Li and Su should be authors rather than they are authors, he emphasizes that to attribute the creation of five-syllable verse to Li Ling is a cultural fact rather than a historical fact. He is inspired by the fact that the emperor Taizong establishes the style of seven-syllable poetry, and retrospectively projects it onto the Han Dynasty. Li Ling and Su Wu are compared to Shen Quanqi and Du

⁵⁷ It is the fifth one from “Twelve Poems of Relieving Depression” 解悶十二首, *Dushi xiangzhu*, 1514.

⁵⁸ Fan Wenlan 范文瀾, ed., *Wenxin diaolong zhu* 文心雕龍注 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2000), 6.75. Fan provides comprehensive sources for the question of the origin of five syllable poetry in the note 19.

Shenyan, who are the most famous early practitioners of the new genre, and therefore transformed into creators in cultural memory.

Critical Practice

If the first two parts of Wu Qi's book discussed above represent Wu Qi's effort of dealing with authoritative texts of classics, in the third part, his critical practice shows influence of the new intellectual world of the seventeenth century. Wu Qi is a good reader who has many interesting and insightful interpretations of poems, most of which are about poetic structure and relationship of words in poems. The characteristic of his critical practice may be concluded in his own word as "divine transformation" and "enlightenment." His poetry interpretation is strongly influenced by drama and novel commentary, Jin Shengtan's 金聖歎 (1608-1661) in particular.⁵⁹ The influence permeates his interpretation and represents itself in many forms, from the borrowing of technical terms and psychological analysis to his reading fictional protagonists and scenarios in poetry. His reading of poetry in terms of novel and drama criticism not only renovates conventional poetic criticism, but also twists the assumptions of novel and drama criticism.

The popularity of fiction and drama reading and writing in the late Ming and the early Qing must have constituted the historical context of Wu Qi's poetry criticism. Fiction and drama are not only genres different from poetry, but also provide a different way of engaging poetry. When discussing Xie Lingyun's poem "Reading Books in the Chamber" 齋中讀書, Wu Qi states his

⁵⁹ One thing that deserves attention is that some technical terms from novel and drama commentary are already shared knowledge, so we cannot say that Wu Qi necessarily accepts them from Jin Shengtan.

Wu Hongyi 吳宏一 points out that Wu Qi follows Jin Shengtan's formalistic criticism 形式批評, and one inevitable weakness of formalistic criticism is to give farfetched interpretations and draw wrong conclusions by false analogy 穿鑿附會. It is true that misreading and over-interpretation occur in some of Wu Qi's interpretations. See Wu Hongyi, *Qingdai shixue chutan* 清代詩學初探 (Taipei: Xuesheng shuju, 1986), 157. Wu Qi's interpretation of poems, Nineteen Old Poems for instance, often begins with a statement: This poem shows that officials cannot get rulers' trust 臣不得於君之詩. Quite often he argues that particular poems are written to satirize (*ci* 刺) petty men. Some of his allegorical interpretations, of course, are neither interesting nor insightful, but since Wu has pointed out it, I will not touch on this point. To neglect it, however, does not mean that Wu Qi's interpretation is perfect.

own view on reading books, relating it to watching drama.

As for my reading books, when I encounter the ancient good people and good deeds, I praise and admire them without cease. I am always happy for the ancients' pleasure. When I encounter the ancient evil people and evil deeds, I also feel indignant and resentful to them. How can I not worry about the ancients' suffering? However, I have never had an authentic experience with the ancients. From the ancient to the present, there is one theater. Books from the ancient to the present are one drama. When I read books, I just make my banter for a moment.

若余之讀書. 凡遇古之善人善事. 則為之讚歎勿衰. 未嘗不樂古人之樂. 及遇古之惡人惡事. 亦為之憤恨不平. 未嘗不憂古人之憂. 然于古人固未嘗認真也. 古今一戲場. 古今之書一戲劇. 余之讀書. 聊展戲謔耳. (14.35)

Wu Qi might just use a drama metaphor to show his detachment from reality, but the statement clearly explains the degree he is influenced by drama. Indeed, in many interpretations, he intends to read poems as plays, where he imagines and experiences dramatic characters' pleasure and sadness. The compound playfulness (*xixue* 戲謔) happens to have the same character play (*xi* 戲) as that in theater (*xichang* 戲場) and plays (*xiju* 戲劇). Wu Qi seems to delightfully imply that his treatment with theater and drama just coincides with the spirit intrinsic in them. In his methodology of criticism, Wu Qi has said that all poems come from grieved heart, and all noblemen are frustrated in a world of difference and conflict, but in practical criticism he reveals the fact that he does not take poetry seriously. The conflict between traditions of seriousness on poetic reading and playfulness Wu Qi infuses to poetry criticism indicates the tension between literary tradition and the new world of the late Ming and the early Qing.

Here I try to analyze some methods in his interpretation that are related to novel and drama commentary.

1. *Caoshe huixian* 草蛇灰線 and *Hongyun tuoyue* 烘雲托月

In Jin Shengtan's novel and drama commentary, there are two important terms that Wu Qi borrows and uses in his poetry interpretation. They are the faint line of a grass snake (*caoshe huixian* 草蛇灰線) and painting the clouds to bring into relief the moon (*hongyun tuoyue* 烘雲托

月). The faint trace of a grass snake is from Jin Shengtan's *Water Margin* (*Shuihu zhuan* 水滸傳) commentary. Its meaning is to use a key image or a key word repeatedly to unify a work.

There is a recipe of the faint trace of a grass snake. Throughout the scene of Jingyang Ridge there are many words of a club; throughout the scene of Purple Stone Street, there are many words of a curtain. They use this recipe. With first glance, there seems nothing important in these words. When you examine them carefully, there is one clue (trace) in them. If you touch the clue, the whole body will act.

有草蛇灰線法。如景陽崗勤敘許多哨棒字。紫石街連寫若干簾子字等是也。驟看之。有如無物。及至細尋。其中便有一條線索。拽之通體俱動。⁶⁰

Painting clouds to bring into relief the moon is from *Western Chamber* (*Xixiang ji* 西廂記) commentary. It is a term borrowed from Chinese painting skill, meaning that something important should be described indirectly.

Have you ever observed a recipe of painting the clouds to bring into relief the moon? One wants to paint the moon, but the moon cannot be painted, so he paints clouds. Though he paints the clouds, the concept does not lie in the clouds. The reason why the concept does not lie in the clouds is that it lies in the moon.

亦嘗觀於烘雲托月之法乎。欲畫月也，月不可畫，因而畫雲。畫雲者。意不在於雲也，意不在於雲者，意固在於月也。⁶¹

Jin Shengtan explains that in *Xixiang ji* Yingying 鶯鶯 is the central figure, while more description is devoted to Zhang Sheng 張生, and it is the skill of painting clouds to bring into relief the moon.

Wu Qi's usage of the term "the faint trace of a grass snake" can be seen in the following example. The poem he discusses is Xie Tiao's 謝朓 (464-499) "On the Way to Xuancheng Commandery, Proceeding from Xinlin Ford Toward Banqiao" 之宣城郡，出新林浦向板橋。

My journey by the River Route seems endless as I gaze southwest,
And yet the River's homing flow is speeding on northeast.
At heaven's edge I recognize a home-bound boat;

⁶⁰ "The Method of Reading the Fifth Book by a Talented Man" 讀第五才子書法, in *Diwu caizishu Shi Nai'an shuihuzhuan* 第五才子書施耐庵水滸傳 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1985), 1. 22.

⁶¹ Jin Shengtan, *Guanhuatang diliu caizishu* 貫華堂第六才子書 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1986), 42.

Amid the mist I make out trees along the River.
 The travel's thoughts are weary of this constant rocking,
 And of lonely journeys in the past already I have had my fill.
 But then, it does indulge my craving for a livelihood,
 And at the same time tallies with my relish for the Glaucous Isles.
 From noise and dust of city life from now on I'll be screened,
 And what delights my heart in this place I will find.
 Although I lack the dusky panther's splendid coat,
 I'll hide at last within the mists of Southern Mountain.

江路西南永，歸流東北驚。天際識歸舟，雲中辨江樹。旅思倦搖搖，孤遊昔已屢。
 既懽懷祿情，復協滄州趣。囂塵自茲隔，賞心於此遇。雖無玄豹姿，終隱南山霧。⁶²

Wu Qi explains the relationship between the couplet “At heaven's edge I recognize a home-bound boat; Amid the mist I make out trees along the River” and the last couplet as follows.

The river flows fast, and the boat moves quickly. It seems that the person in the boat has such a strong mind of homing that his mind forces the boat to move so quickly. Moreover, since the Jin Dynasty crossed the river to the south, all officials have had their homes in Danyang. Xie Tiao left home and traveled out, therefore he thought that all boats flowing down the river were returning home. The line has two conceptions of envy and anger... In the line of amid the mist... in fact secretly couches the vein of at last hiding within the mists in the last line, but it is not pointed out clearly. It is like a line in ashes.⁶³

水流急。舟行速。似舟中之人若有歸心迫之者然。又自晉代南渡後。仕者盡家丹陽。眺離家而外行。則意彼順流而下者。皆歸舟也。此句有羨忿二意... 雲中句... 實暗伏結句終隱之脈。但未點明。如灰中之線耳 (15.21).

Wu Qi transforms the faint trace of a grass snake into the trace in dust. He believes that becoming a recluse is Xie Tiao's intention (*zhi*) or the basic conception (*yi*) of the poem, which is revealed in the last line. Vein (*mai* 脈) is a literary term borrowed from human body, so vein itself is a trace extending through a literary work and making it a live body. Wu Qi's usage of vein seems to say that the vein carries the message of *zhi* or *yi* throughout the poem. In the forth line, “Amid the mist I make out trees along the River,” is implied the *zhi* or *yi* that is conveyed in the

⁶² Xiao Tong, ed., *Wenxuan*, with annotations by Li Shan 李善 (689) et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 27. 5-6 (hereafter *Wenxuan*). Translation is from Richard B. Mather, *The Age of Eternal Brilliance: Three Lyric Poets of the Yung-ming Era (483-493)* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), 2. 217.

⁶³ When Wu Qi says *huizhong zhixian* 灰中之線, I think that he means line (trace) in dust, rather than grey line, even though Jin Shengtang's *caoshe huixian* 草蛇灰線 is more likely to mean the grey line (faint trace).

last line, the skill Wu Qi calls couch (*fu* 伏). Thus two poetic lines correspond with each other implicitly, as if there is a trace hidden in dust. If *zhi* or *yi* conveyed in the last line can be compared as a music motif, then the forth line is an variation of the motif. Like Jin Shengtan, Wu Qi uses the term to represent the organic unity of the literary work. However, the deviation is also clear. In Wu Qi's usage, the term refers to the laying down of unobtrusive clues rather than to repeated key words.

Wu Qi's interpretation of the famous couplet in this poem ingeniously reveals the fact that it is not purely about scenery. He psychologizes the poet and points out that the verbs "recognize" and "make out" carry an emotional message.⁶⁴ He argues that when Xie Tiao uses "home-bound" to describe the boat, he is obsessed with home sickness, which further refers to the metaphysical return, to withdraw from the society. Thus, we can find that though using the novel term Wu Qi is also discussing a basic issue of scene 景 and feeling 情 in poetics.

Wu Qi combines novel commentary with poetic criticism and creates the new term for his own. Though situated in different contexts and representing different critical aims, Wu Qi's "a line in ashes" reminds readers of Yan Yu's such metaphors as "tones in the empty air" 空中之音, "color in a face" 相中之色, "moonlight in the water" 水中之月, "an image in a mirror" 鏡中之象⁶⁵ both grammatically and semantically. They share the same quality of leaving no tracks to be followed 無跡可求, however, "a line in ashes" is also different from Yan Yu's overall impression of

⁶⁴ Wu Qi's famous contemporary Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619-1692) provides a similar interpretation of this couplet, which is incorporated in his systematic discussion of the relationship between scene and feeling. "There are words that seem to have nothing to do with feeling yet contain infinite feeling. ... (In this couplet) indistinctly a person with deep feeling gazing at the distance is vividly portrayed. The scene written at this point is a live scene." Wang's interpretation is cited in Cao Rongnan 曹融南, ed., *Xie Xuancheng ji jiaozhu* 謝宣城集校注 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991), 221. For some other poems, there is also similarity between Wu Qi's interpretation and Wang Fuzhi's.

⁶⁵ *Canglang shihua jiaoshi*, 26. *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 406.

“tones,” “color,” “moonlight,” and “image” in that a line is linear like a vein, and transient, lost if a breeze stirs the ashes. Wu Qi imagines Xie Tiao’s poem as a process, where the linearity of the poet’s gaze looking to the trees in the clouds makes this couplet tied to the conclusion of the poem.

Another example of a line in ashes appears in his discussion of one of Ruan Ji’s “Singing My Feelings” 詠懷 on Bo Yi 伯夷 and Shu Qi 叔齊.⁶⁶ The last couplet reads, “They seek humaneness, humaneness has come to them. Why should I sigh and lament for them” 求仁自得仁, 豈復歎咨嗟. The second line reads, “To the north I look at the blue mountains and hills” 北望青山阿. Wu Qi believes that blue mountains echo the statement from the *Analects*: the humane find pleasure in mountains.⁶⁷ Therefore he states that in the second line the line of humaneness couches in cold ashes 冷灰中伏仁字一線. (7.11) Wu Qi’s usage of the line in ashes here is similar as that in Xie Tiao’s poem. They both refer to the embedded clues that echo the conception of the poem lying in the end. At more places, Wu Qi uses the term “couch” or “vein” alone. Couch means that one former line contains message that can be found in a line afterward. Vein means the development and transition of the conception throughout poetry. They are both used to show the unity of poetry. In *Three Kingdoms* commentary, there is a statement of couch that can explain Wu Qi’s usage of it.

The book *Three Kingdoms* has the wonder of sowing seeds at an interval of a year, and couching steps at an earlier moment. Those who are good at gardening throw seeds in the field and wait for them to sprout in a right moment. Those who are good at playing chess game make a causal step before more than ten steps, and the correspondence lies in more than ten steps later. The method of practical description and virtual description in the composition is also like this.

三國一書. 有隔年下種. 先時伏著之妙. 善圃者投種於地. 待時而發. 善弈者下一閑著於數十著之

⁶⁶ *Wenxuan*, 23. 4.

⁶⁷ Chapter “Yongye” 雍也, see *Lunyu zhushu*, 6.54.

前. 而其應在數十著之後. 文章虛實之法. 亦猶是已.⁶⁸

In the following interpretation Wu Qi uses both the term the faint line of a grass snake and the term painting the clouds to bring into relief the moon. The poem he discusses is “Green, Green Grass by the River” 青青河畔草 from Nineteen Old Poems.

Green, green is the grass by the river,
in garden the willows are all dense and full.
High in the tower a woman so lovely,
She glows in the window, white and so pure.
Rouge on her cheeks, bright in her beauty,
and she puts out a pale and delicate hand.
Once long ago I sang in the bar room,
now I'm the wife of a traveling man.
He travels for pleasure and never comes home now,
A lonely bed can't be kept empty for long.
青青河畔草，鬱鬱園中柳。盈盈樓上女，皎皎當窗牖。
娥娥紅粉粧，纖纖出素手。昔為倡家女，今為蕩子婦。蕩子行不歸，空床難獨守。⁶⁹

The poem writes scene from what is seen from eyes and writes feeling from what is felt in mind. Sometimes it writes from the perspective of the poet, sometimes it writes from that of the person being written. The wonder of scene and feeling lies in that the empty and solid give birth to each other seamlessly. It is especially wonderful in the immediate moment. Four lines of “lovely” are written practically from the author’s eyes. Four lines of “once long ago” are written virtually from the author’s mind. All the stirring taste lies in the opening two lines of “green,” because they stir the spirit of the whole piece. Obviously they are picked from the author’s eyes, but still they seem to be picked from the woman’s eyes. Obviously in the two lines the author virtually imitates what lies in the woman’s mind, but still it seems that feelings in the woman’s mind and eyes correspond exactly to what is in the author’s mind and eyes. It indeed has the wonder in the skill of the faint trace of a grass snake. Why should the two lines be picked from the author’s eyes? I can use painting as an analogy. The moon should be positioned among light clouds, and birds should be on sparse branches. (Clouds and branches) decorate (the moon and birds) indirectly in the side in order to aid the momentum (of the moon and birds). If the poem opens abruptly from the line of “lovely,” it is still a poem. But it is like to paint a beauty in a plain chamber, and without the foil of stuff such as curtain and chair, the beauty looks lustreless. Also, the beauty’s charm can not peer clearly. Only after writing “grass by the river” and “willow in garden,” one green and the other dense, into an extraordinarily hot and sensuous plot in a drama, can the woman in the tower be inserted in between beautifully. It is like that Tang dancers dance around branches among lotus petals and

⁶⁸ *Sanguozhi yanyi*, 1. 26.

⁶⁹ *Wenxuan*, 29. 1-2. Translation is from Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 259 (hereafter *Anthology*).

tear apart a beauty on an emerald plate.

詩于眼中寫景. 意中寫情. 或就詩人寫. 或就所詠之人寫. 景與情妙在虛實相生. 了無痕跡. 尤要在現前之一刻. 此詩盈盈四句. 就作者眼中實寫. 昔為四句. 就作者意中虛寫. 其興趣全在起手青青二句. 振起一篇精神. 分明從作者眼中拈出. 確又似於女之眼中拈出. 分明從作者眼中虛擬女之意中. 確又似女之意中眼中之感. 恰有符于作者之眼中意中. 真有草蛇灰線之妙也. 其從作者眼前拈出者何. 譬之繪事. 置月必於輕雲之間. 鳥必於疏枝之上. 旁然曲綴. 所以助其勢也. 此詩若竟從盈盈句突起. 亦自成詩. 如畫美人于素闌之上. 無複帷帳幾物以襯貼之. 便爾淡寞. 即美人之風神. 亦無由顯見也. 唯先將河草園柳. 一青一鬱. 寫成異樣熱鬧排場. 然後夾出樓上女來. 如唐人舞招枝於蓮花瓣中. 拆出個美人于翠盤之上. 乃為麗矚耳 (4.5-6).

Here the faint trace of a grass snake is different from its original meaning in Jin Shengtan's commentary. It seems only to function as a cliché of praising the poetic skill. However, the skill of painting clouds to bring into relief the moon is transformed creatively in the interpretation. Wu Qi relates the indirect description in this skill to the differentiation of the solid 實 and empty 虛, of description of the actual 實寫 and virtual description 虛寫, and of two perspectives in description. First, from the third line "High in the tower a woman so lovely" to the sixth line "she puts out a pale and delicate hand," there is description of the woman's appearance, which is written from the poet's eyes and defined as practical description. From the seventh line "Once long ago I sang in the bar room" to the last line "A lonely bed can't be kept empty for long," there is description of the woman's thought, which is written from the poet's mind and defined as virtual description. Thus practical description writes what the poet sees in reality, while virtual description writes what the poet thinks in imagination. Both what the poet sees and what he thinks are unified as the poet's perspective. Second, Wu Qi interprets a subtler interplay of practical description and virtual description in the opening couplet. In surface the couplet simply writes scenery, so it should belong to the category of practical description. However, Wu Qi argues that the scenery description is also the poet's imagination of the woman's thoughts, so it also belongs to the category of virtual description. Moreover, Wu Qi inserts the woman's perspective in the opening couplet, and says that it is also what the woman sees and what she

thinks. He argues that what the poet sees and thinks exactly corresponds to what the woman sees and thinks, and therefore both the poet and woman are in the same moment of feeling the green grass and dense willow 作者與此女同在草青柳鬱之一刻中 (4.7).

In some sense, Wu Qi treats the relationship between the poet and the woman as that between a novelist and the female protagonist the novelist creates. There is ambiguity of who is the speaker (mostly the speaker is identified with the poet).⁷⁰ The poet-novelist either speaks for his protagonist in third person, or he lets the woman express herself in the first person, and yet two situations cannot be split apart clearly, as in the opening couplet. There are two discourses and two perspectives in it; not only are two perspectives juxtaposed, but the poet-novelist's perspective well fits the woman's, showing his penetration, most remarkably in his imagination of the woman's loneliness.⁷¹

Wu Qi compares the relationship between the opening couplet and the rest of the poem as that between clouds and the moon, sparse branches and birds, and furniture decoration and a beauty, all from painting technique. As indirection description, the opening couplet of scenery functions

⁷⁰ The ambiguity of speaker mostly appears in Old Poetry and *yuefu* poetry. When Wu Qi discusses poems that belong to the *yuefu* tradition, he often discusses this point. One example is his discussion of Shen Yue's 沈約 "On the Third Day of the Third Month: Composed Extemporaneously" 三月三日率爾成篇. He differentiates two perspectives, one from the poet and the other from the travelers written in the poem. There are two couplets both about spring scene. Wu Qi argues that one couplet is from the poet's perspective, so it is not just about scene, but also conveys the poet's lament for time passage; and the other couplet is from the travelers' perspective, and simply writes about scene. (16. 6-7)

⁷¹ Wu Qi differentiates two perspectives in order to prove that the poem is written to satirize the dissolute woman. In his view, when the poet writes the woman from his perspective, it implies his judgment. As a comparison, he argues that in Wang Changling's 王昌齡 (? 698-756) "Grievance in Boudoir" 閨怨, because the poet writes a woman gazing at the spring scene from her own perspective, the poem is written to praise the chaste lady. A later critic Zhang Xuecheng 章學誠 (1738-1801) provides a similar argument. Zhang Xuecheng clearly compares a poet to a dramatist, and poetry to performance. His argument is as follows. Just as an actor can play any role, a poet can speak in anyone's voice. When an actor plays a role, he can distance himself from the role by using monologue, and thus admonishing the role. It is the same for a poet, because in poetry a poet can both speak for the protagonist and provide his own admonishment to the protagonist. Also, Zhang Xuecheng relates this literary technique to a historian's work, by arguing that a poet's admonishment is like a historian's rhymed evaluation 論贊 inserted in narration. See Zhang Xuecheng's "Women's Learning" 婦學, in Ye Ying 葉瑛, annotated, *Wenshi tongyi jiaozhu* 文史通義校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 531-553. From these two examples, we can see the influence of drama experience on poetry interpretation.

as the foil of the woman in lines afterward. Put in the tradition of poetic criticism, we can find that Wu Qi provides a fresh interpretation of how affective image (*xing* 興) functions in poetry. Green grass and dense willows in the opening couplet intensify the woman's anxiety and elicit her desire, but simultaneously they stir the poet-speaker and incite him to notice her, and finally they become the spot where perceptions from two parts converge.

In his interpretation of the other poem "Faraway the Oxherd" 迢迢牽牛星 from Nineteen Old Poems, Wu Qi discusses a different kind of practical description and virtual description, and here they are related to the ambiguity of distance.

Faraway lies that star, the Oxherd;
she sparkles, the Maid in the River of Stars.
She stretches her pale and delicate hand,
clacking, she whiles away time with the shuttle.
A day is spent and her weaving not done,
As her tears fall down like the rain.
The River of Stars is shallow and clear,
not are they so very far apart.
But across that bright and brimming stream,
She gazes with longing and cannot speak.
迢迢牽牛星，皎皎河漢女。纖纖擢素手，劓劓弄機杼。
終日不成章，泣涕零如雨。河漢清且淺，相去復幾許。盈盈一水間，脈脈不得語。⁷²

Wu Qi asks a question about the contradiction of descriptions of the River of Stars. At one place, the Oxherd is "faraway," but at the other place, the River of Stars is "shallow," and the Maid and Oxherd are not "far apart." One can simply answer the question by saying that since they are doomed by the gods to be lodged apart, even though the River of Stars is shallow they are not allowed to cross it. Wu Qi, however, provides a complex answer to the simple question.

Whenever one thing is big or small, distant or close, it has a certain shape. It is just that shape can be changed by momentum. Therefore, the close thing becomes faraway, and the thing faraway becomes close. This is a consensus of masters of shape. However, the Oxherd written here is suddenly faraway and suddenly close. It is indeed because of the relative relationship of shape and momentum, but in fact it is also changed in the Maid's eyes and mind.

⁷² *Wenxuan*, 29. 6. Translation is from *Anthology*, 257.

凡物之大小遠近. 有一定之形. 特形為勢變. 於是近者反遠. 遠者反近. 此形家之通論也. 而此之所寫. 忽遠忽近. 固由形勢. 而實又變於織女之眼中意中. (4.18-19)

The statement that distance can change dependent on situations seems to echo Wu Qi's discussion of "Zhongyong" passage: when the interpretation of a poem seems farther from the point, in fact it is closer to the point. We can find that he is interested in contradictory things. Here he says that shape can be changed by momentum (*Shi* 勢). Momentum "was used in early political discourse as 'power,' the force that inhered in the actions or disposition of a state or ruler." "It is a force that inheres in some thing or event and directs its movement along the path of least resistance."⁷³ As we may say subjective time and objective time, there are also subjective distance and objective distance. What Wu Qi exactly emphasizes is that momentum is the force lying in one's subjectivity.

It is because that when the Maid with the shuttle says "all day long," in her mind she believes that the Oxherd and she will never have the momentum to meet each other. Then suddenly she raises her head and gazes afar, discovering that the Oxherd is at the opposite of the River, and that the River is shallow and clear. She believes that they almost have the momentum to meet each other. Therefore the shape in her eyes changes the momentum in her mind. She says, "not are they so very far apart." Since there has been the momentum of almost meeting each other, she further expects that they will certainly meet. However, because she is with the shuttle and cannot cross the River, once again the momentum in her mind suddenly changes the shape in her eyes. She says, "across that bright and brimming stream." Two characters of "bright, brimming" even change two characters of "clear, shallow," and transform the clear and shallow River into deep obstruction.

蓋織女機中. 終日云云. 此時意中以為與牽牛永無相遇之勢矣. 乃忽而舉頭一望. 瞥見牽牛在彼河岸. 河水又複清淺. 幾幾乎有相遇之勢矣. 於是眼中之形. 變其意中之勢. 曰. 相去複幾許. 既有幾幾相遇之勢. 方且期為必遇矣. 而又以身在機中. 不得往渡. 於是意中之勢. 忽又變其眼中之形. 曰. 盈盈一水間. 盈盈二字. 竟把清淺二字. 反化為深阻矣. (4.19)

Wu Qi argues that the shallow River is the objective shape perceived by the Maid's eyes; far apart is the subjective momentum controlled by her mind. He delineates the Maid's psychological vacillation: when the shape supersedes the momentum, the River becomes shallow; when the momentum supersedes the shape, the River becomes deep. Here the skill of indirect

⁷³ *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 230.

description is that the poet “writes far distance in terms of closeness” 以近寫遠 (4.19). Since far distance is subjective momentum, and closeness is objective shape, it is also the skill of writing virtually (far) in terms of writing practically (close). Compared with writing far distance in terms of itself, the indirect description intensifies the Maid’s melancholy: the closeness that cannot be crossed represents greater obstruction and despair.

2. *Xiezi* 楔子, *Guansuo* 關鎖 and Empty Words

In novel commentary critics invent various technical terms in order to explain the rules of narrative. Wu Qi scatters them here and there in his poetry interpretation, with the consequence that he seems to read poetry as narrative. His opening comment of Xie Lingyun’s 謝靈運 (385-433) poem “On the Way I Recall Those in the Mountain” 道路憶山中 says, “It begins with the sound and ends with the sound. This is the great rule of the piece as a whole in the poem” 以聲音起, 以聲音結, 一詩大章法. (14.23) The statement is often used in novel commentary to explain the narrative structure. Jin Shengtan’s last comment on *Water Margin* is, “It begins with a poem and ends with a poem. What a great rule of the piece as a whole” 以詩起, 以詩結, 極大章法.⁷⁴ The similar comment appears in the end of *Three Kingdoms*, “A great book begins with a lyric and ends with a poem. What a wonderful rule of the piece as a whole” 一部大書. 以詞起. 以詩收. 絕妙章法.⁷⁵ From Wu Qi’s interpretations, we can find that his aim is exactly to discover rules of the piece as a whole,⁷⁶ and novel and drama terms help him achieve this aim.

⁷⁴ *Diwu caizishu Shi Nai'an shuihuzhuan*, 2.1124.

⁷⁵ *Sanguozhi yanyi*, 2. 1343.

⁷⁶ To find rules in poetry might echo popular poetic pedagogy, which is despised by many Qing critics. Ye Xie 葉燮 (1627-1703) criticizes rules in poetry, “He will analyze a poem in terms of the rules of couplet construction and bring it all together in rules of the piece as a whole. This sort of thing has long been taught by old schoolmasters in little villages” 析之為句法. 總之為章法. 此三家村詞伯相傳久矣. *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 502. What Ye Xie criticizes seems to be exactly what Wu Qi does in his poetry interpretation. It is understandable that his status in Qing critics is relatively low, since to discover rules in poetry never becomes elite poetics.

Wu Qi learns a term wedge (*xiezi* 楔子) from Jin Shengtan's novel commentary to describe relationship of lines in poetry. Jin's definition of wedge is that wedge is to use one thing to bring out the other thing 楔子者. 以物出物之謂也.⁷⁷ In his interpretation of Lu Ji's 陸機 (261-303) "Imitating Moonlight Glowing So Bright" 擬明月何皎皎, Wu Qi uses this term to analyze how scene and feeling give birth to each other wonderfully 情景互生之妙 (10.31).

Calmly I sleep in the northern hall,
Bright moonlight enters my window.
It is reflected, with remaining radiance,
I hold it, but it does not brim in my hand.
Chill wind circles the winding chamber,
Cold cicadas sing on the high willow.
I hesitate, touched by seasonal things,
I have already traveled for long time.⁷⁸
I am not successful to be out to serve as an official,
It is hard to keep parting longing constantly.
安寢北堂上, 明月入我牖. 照之有餘暉, 攬之不盈手.
涼風繞曲房, 寒蟬鳴高柳. 踟躕感節物, 我行永已久. 游宦會無成, 離思難常守.⁷⁹

Wu Qi's interpretation is as follows.

There are poems where feeling gives birth to scene, and poems where scene gives birth to feeling. The correct regulation for writers is only to write feeling, and writing scene is just a way borrowed to write feeling. It is like a wedge that draws things. For instance, this poem originally writes parting longing, but it uses bright moonlight to draw wind and cicadas, and wind and cicadas to draw seasonal things. After all, they are all used to draw parting longing. However, to use wind and cicadas to draw seasonal things is to use a wedge that comes naturally, while to use bright moonlight to draw wind and cicadas is to use a wedge that comes unconsciously (or accidentally).

詩有因情生景者. 有因景生情者. 在作者正例. 只是寫情. 而寫景乃其借徑. 即如出物的楔子一般. 如此詩本是寫離思. 卻以明月楔出風蟬. 風蟬楔出節物. 只是總楔出個離思來. 然風蟬與節物是自來的楔子. 明月與風蟬是倘來的楔子. (10.31)

⁷⁷ *Diwu caizishu Shi Nai'an shuihuzhuan*, 28.

⁷⁸ *Wenxuan* annotation says that the speaker of the poem is a wife in boudoir. It is because that in the original "Moonlight Glowing So Bright," the speaker is obviously a woman. Wu Qi points out that in his *Wenxuan zuanzhu* 文選纂注 Zhang Fengyi 張鳳翼 (style name Boqi 伯起) (1527-1613) believes that the speaker should be the traveling man, because the line "I have already traveled for long time" refers to the traveling man. Wu Qi's point is that two choices can coincide, because "I travel" can be either a practical description or a virtual description. Here I translate the speaker as the traveling man.

⁷⁹ *Wenxuan*, 30. 34.

This statement rewrites Jin Shengtan's commentary in the prologue (*xiezi* 楔子) of *Shuihuzhuan*. Jin believes that such events and figures in the prologue as the plague, the Taoist sacrificial ceremony and the Taoist master are all wedges written to draw the inscriptional stone. Here, Wu Qi follows Jin both in idea and tone, saying that all scenery images are wedges used to draw feeling. He appropriates the term to discuss an old topic in poetics: scene is written for feeling. As for the relationship between these scenery images, he differentiates two wedges. The wedge that comes naturally means that one image has a natural association for the other. Cicada singing naturally incites the association that the season begins to change. On the contrary, the wedge that comes unconsciously means that the association is not predetermined, as that moonlight cannot necessarily incite the association for wind and cicada. Wu Qi imagines that the speaker is attracted by moonlight to the courtyard where he enjoys moonlight and discovers moonlight looking cold, and then

In his mind indistinctly he thinks of seasonal things, but he cannot speak them out for a short while. Suddenly he feels a spate of cold wind, and hears a sound of cicada singing. He is startled, and realizes that it is because seasonal things are changing. Unconsciously his parting longing is stirred.

意思覺得隱隱約約是個節物。只是一時口頭說不出來。忽而覺得一陣涼風。聽得一聲蟬鳴。兜的一驚。省得都是節物變遷。不覺離思怦怦動起。(10.31)

He analyzes how moonlight leads to wind and cicadas by reconstructing the process of the speaker's psychological movement. What he tries to do is to fill gaps between poetic fragments through logical deduction, to explain the cause and consequence relationship between images and lines, to draw narrative plots, and ultimately to make poetry more comprehensible. Apart from the term wedge, in Wu Qi's vocabulary "give birth to" (*sheng* 生), "force" (*bi* 逼), "incite" (*yin* 引), and "provoke" (*tiaodong* 挑動) function similarly as to explain how images, words and lines are connected.

Wu Qi is interested in analyzing the relationship of words in poetry. He often states that one word (or one line) is in charge of a whole poem. He believes that in order to make poetry comprehensible, the key is to explain empty words (*xuzi* 虛字) that control poetic structure.

People in the world often say that poetry lies between the explicable and inexplicable. This is nonsense. There is no poem that cannot be explicated. If there are poems that cannot be explicated, you should examine empty words. If further you cannot explicate a poem by examining empty words, you should compare the first half and the second half of the poem and see (the relation).

世人動云. 詩在可解不可解之間. 此妄語也. 詩無不可解. 若有不能解者. 當於虛字上尋討. 若虛字上更尋討不出. 則於詩前後照看. (11.34).

The statement that poetry lies between the explicable and inexplicable is from Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590)⁸⁰. It is also a belief repeated by many critics.⁸¹ Wu Qi shares with Jin Shengtan the same belief that poetry needs explication and can be explicated.⁸² This is understandable, since Wu Qi reads poetry as narrative, and borrows techniques from narrative commentary to explain poetry.

Wu Qi explains what he means by empty words in several places. In his interpretation of Xie Tiao's "Harmonizing with a Poem by Xu of the Capital Ministry on 'Departing From Xinting Shoreline'" 和徐都曹出新亭渚⁸³, Wu Qi compares the third couplet from this poem with the third

⁸⁰ It is Wang Shizhen's comment on Wang Changling's poem "Going out of the Passes" 出塞 in *Yiyuan zhiyan* 藝苑卮言, vol. 4.

⁸¹ For instance, Xie Zhen 謝榛 (1495-1575) says that "there are poems that can be explicated, that cannot be explicated and that do not need to be explicated" 詩有可解, 不可解, 不必解. See *Siming shihua* 四溟詩話, in Ding Fubao 丁福保 (1874-1952), ed., *Lidai shihua xubian* 歷代詩話續編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 3. 1137. Ye Xie 葉燮 says, "What it refers to lies at the conjunction between the explicable and the inexplicable" 其旨歸在可解不可解之會. *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 529.

⁸² See *Qingdai shixue chutan*, 148. In the 23rd item in his "Methods of Reading *Xixiang ji* the Sixth Book by a Talented Man," Jin Shengtan cites a couplet from Yuan Haowen's 元好問 (1190-1257) "Thirty Poems on Poetry" 論詩三十首 and disputes it. The couplet reads, "I embroider love birds and let you see them, but I do not give my gold needle to you" 鴛鴦繡出從君看, 不把金針度與人. Love bird is a metaphor for literary works, and the gold needle is a metaphor for how works are created. Jin Shengtan believes that his explanation of *Xixiang ji* is the gold needle and he wants to show it to others. See *Guanhuatang diliu caizishu*, 14.

⁸³ *Wenxuan*, 30. 34-35.

couplet from Wang Wei's 王維 (701-761) "Harmonizing with a Poem by Secretary Jia Zhi on 'Going to See the Emperor in the Morning at the Palace of Great Illumination'" 和賈舍人早朝大明宮之作⁸⁴. The couplet of Wang Wei's poem reads, "The sunlight just arrives, and (under the dish of accepting dew) the immortal's palm moves; smoke of perfume is ready to attach to the emperor's robe, where dragons are floating" 日色才臨仙掌動, 香煙欲傍袞龍浮. The couplet of Xie Tiao's poem reads, "sun sparkles move on the stream; rays in the wind float past the border of the grass" 日華川上動, 風光草際浮. Wu Qi interprets the two couplets as follows.

Sunlight originally does not have nature of stirring into motion, so it needs the character "just" to show activity. Both perfume and smoke have the idea of floating. Therefore from the character "float" the character "ready" is born... As for the immortal's palm and sunlight, dragons and smoke of perfume, four of them are all solid words. Without four empty words "just arrive" and "ready to attach," how can the character "move" and "float" be drawn? 日色本無動性. 須得才字方形出動字. 香煙俱有浮意. 因浮字遂生欲字... 仙掌與日色. 袞龍與香煙. 四邊俱是實字. 苟非才臨欲傍四個虛字. 如何楔得動字及浮字出. (15.13)

Glints of the sun do not move, and they move because of the stream. Moreover, the poet adds the character "on" after the character "stream," so that we can see that both the stream and sunlight are moving. Though wind has rays, rays do not appear until they touch the grass. The poet adds the character "border" after the character "grass," so that we can see that neither the grass nor wind is floating. Generally it is the spring scene that is floating.

日華不動. 因川而動. 卻又於川字下著個上字. 見此動者亦川亦日. 風雖有光. 觸草始顯. 於草下著一際字. 覺此浮者. 非草非風. 總是一片春色. (15.13-14)

Here empty words refer to particles and phrases that contain particles. His point is that empty words and solid words have dynamic interplay in poetry. It is empty words that endow some qualities on solid words. In Wang Wei's couplet, empty words, "just" and "ready," help solid words (nouns) achieve activity, and connect nouns with verbs that represent activity. In Xie Tiao's couplet, one empty word, "on," creates an impression that sunlight touches the stream and the movement of the stream makes sunlight flickering. The other empty word, "border," seems to emphasize that the spring scene permeates everything, even tiny space between grasses. These

⁸⁴ *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩, 128.

interpretations represent Wu Qi's attention to refining words and his close attention to visual experience.

In the following interpretation of Bao Zhao's 鮑照 (414?-466) *yuefu* poem "Ballad of In Youth Making Friends with Hangers-on" 結客少年場行⁸⁵, the meaning of empty words changes. The poem writes a young man leaving his hometown to lead a life of a knight-errant and returning with regret in old age. In the middle of the poem, one line is "I have been away from my hometown for thirty years" 去鄉三十載 that connects two parts of the poem. Wu Qi says that the line functions as empty words.

When we observe the ancients' poems, the importance does not lie in solid words, rather it lies in some empty words. Moreover, they are empty words that seem unimportant. For instance, as for the line "I have been away from my hometown for thirty years" in this poem, few people do not think that it is just a transition, but they do not know that a bolt-key of the whole piece lies here.

凡觀古人之詩. 卻不在實實字面. 卻在幾個虛字上. 卻又是無要緊虛字. 如此詩中之去鄉三十載. 人鮮不以為過文耳. 殊不知一篇關鎖全在此句. (13. 21)

Here empty words, transition, and the bolt-key (guansuo 關鎖) mean one thing. The term bolt-key is borrowed from novel commentary. Both Jin Shengtan and Mao Lun (Mao Zonggang) have used it. Jin Says, "Casually a bolt-key is made, and two biographies are connected into one piece" 閑中作一關鎖. 兩傳遂成一篇.⁸⁶ Mao says: "The book *Three Kingdoms* has great correspondences in the beginning and the end, and great bolt-keys in the middle" 三國一書. 有首尾大照應. 中間大關鎖處.⁸⁷ Thus the bolt-key means narration in the middle of a novel, which connects two parts of the novel into an organic structure. Wu Qi uses the term in the same way. The reason why he calls the transitional line in the poem as empty words might be that the line itself does not contain concrete information and is easily overlooked by readers.

⁸⁵ *Wenxuan*, 28. 24-25.

⁸⁶ Jin Shengtan's commentary in *Shuihuzhuan*, chapter 50. See *Diwu caizishu Shi Nai'an shuihuzhuan*, 2. 833.

⁸⁷ Mao's commentary in "Method of Reading *Three Kingdoms*," see *Sanguozhi yanyi*, 1. 29.

The following is Wu Qi's explanation of Tao Yuanming's poem "In Imitation of Ancient Poems" 擬古, where he provides the above statement that poetry is explicable. His interpretation also provides a different example of empty words.

The sun has set, and there is no cloud in the sky,
Spring wind is mild, slightly blowing.
The fair lady loves this clear night,
She is drunk and sings until morning.
When the song ends, she sighs for long time,
Holding the song in mind, people are touched very much.
Bright, bright moon among clouds,
Brilliant, brilliant flowers in leaves.

It is not that they cannot keep beauty for a while,
(Beautiful things) cannot last long, what should we do?

日暮天無雲，春風扇微和。佳人美清夜，達曙酣且歌。

歌竟長歎息，持此感人多。明明雲間月，灼灼葉中花。豈無一時好，不久當如何？⁸⁸

Wu Qi's explanation can be paraphrased like this. The poem has two parts linked by a couplet in the middle, "When the song ends, she sighs for long time, Holding the song in mind, people are touched very much." He calls the couplet a bolt-key. But here the empty word is *mei* 美 in the first part. It is the key empty word because the second part negates its meaning: the fair lady thinks the night is beautiful (Wu Qi understands the word in a literal way), so she wants to enjoy the night, but each line in the second part shows her despair. Thus the poem writes about feeling of grievance (*yuan qing* 怨情), which cannot be discovered if readers do not pay attention to the relationship of the first part and second part. Wu Qi explains the transition of two parts as follows.

Therefore she is drunk and sings songs. She believes that by doing so she might not waste this clear night. She is drunk and sings songs until the morning, but she is just drunk and sings songs alone. When the song ends and she thinks again of this, has she failed to live up to the drunkenness and songs? Since she has failed to live up to the drunkenness and songs, she has failed to live up to the clear night. She feels that the whole night of drunkenness and songs is melancholy from the twilight to the morning. How can she not sigh for long time? Therefore we can discover that loving the clear night previously is just to resent the clear night.... The

⁸⁸ *Wenxuan*, 30.38.

line of “bright, bright sky” is born from the line of “no cloud”; further that the flowers are brilliant is seen from the moon. However, they are not real scenes, and are used to analogize that youth easily fleets away, thus showing that one cannot fail to live up to good time. What the fair lady sighs is this, and what touches others is also this.

於是且酣且歌. 以為庶幾不負此清夜. 及且酣且歌. 自夕達曙. 亦只是自酣自歌耳. 歌闌更思. 不空負此酣此歌乎. 既空負此酣此歌. 即空負此清夜. 覺徹夜酣歌. 皆自夕至曙之愁悶矣. 哪得不長歎. 乃見前之美清夜正是怨清夜耳....天明明句. 從無雲生. 灼灼又從月看出. 然非實境. 藉以喻年華易逝. 以見良時不可空負. 美人之所歎者在此. 旁人之所感者亦在此. (11.34)

Wu Qi’s reading of grievance seems very unique. We can find that the reading depends on a message that the beauty is alone, the message not in the poem itself. He believes that *mei* is an empty word, in that the word makes a contrast with true conception (grievance) of the poem. Here the empty word seems to refer to the key word that is connected with the conception in a special way.

3. Moment

Wu Qi’s interest in differentiating meanings of words is related to his reflection on moments in poetry. In the following statement, he gives a delicate explanation of subtle difference among expressions of time, which shows his sensitivity to both word and time. In the statement, distributing time coincides with distributing words.

If there is no beginning and no end, it is called constancy. If there is a beginning and an end, it is called time. If there is a beginning yet no end, it is called long. If there is an end yet no beginning, it is called duration. If something begins as interruption and ends as interruption, and there is only a while at present, it is called moment. The poem is wonderful in using the character moment and the character long. Two characters mean that though my feeling comes from the immediate moment of observing rain, my mind does last thousands of years.

無始無終曰常. 有始有終曰時. 有始無終曰悠. 有終無始曰久. 前截始. 後截終. 止目前之一頃曰暫. 此詩用暫字悠字妙甚. 此是言我之懷雖出於眼前觀雨之頃. 而其意固千古不盡也. (15.17-18)

The poem is Xie Tiao’s “Looking at Rain in the Morning” 觀朝雨.⁸⁹ The couplet Wu Qi refers to reads, “Ears and eyes, for a brief moment, are without distraction; ruminating on the ancients, I

⁸⁹ *Wenxuan*, 30. 18.

am truly lost in thought”⁹⁰ 耳目暫無擾，懷古信悠哉。 According to its original usage in the *Classic of Poetry*, you 悠 in youzai 悠哉 means thinking.⁹¹ Here Wu Qi seems to explain it as long or endless thought. However, there is indeed a contrast of the momentary and eternal in the couplet.

In Tao Yuanming’s “Bearers’ Song” 挽歌, Wu Qi also discovers this contrast.

How boundless and indistinct desolate grasses are,
Winds also whistle in silver poplars.
In the bitter frost of the ninth month,
You send me out of the distant suburb.
There are no houses in four sides,
Tall graves are like high mountains.
The horse neighs to the sky,
Winds whistle itself.
Once the dark chamber is closed,
For a thousand years there will be no more dawn.
For a thousand years there will be no more dawn,
The worthy and wise have no way.
Those who have sent me here,
go back to their own homes.
My relatives might still be sad,
Also, others already begin to sing songs.
After death I need not say anything,
Entrusting my body to the mountains and being one with them.
荒草何茫茫，白楊亦蕭蕭。嚴霜九月中，送我出遠郊。
四面無人居，高墳正嵯峨。馬為仰天鳴，風為自蕭條。
幽室一已閉，千年不復朝。千年不復朝，賢達無奈何。
向來相送人，各已歸其家。親戚或餘悲，他人亦已歌。死去何所道，託體同山阿。⁹²

He focuses on the couplet “My relatives might still be sad; also, others already begin to sing songs.” He says that the couplet is good at two characters “might” (*huo* 或) and “also” (*yi* 亦) (both empty words), since they signify that when others begin to sing, the relatives might also participate in singing. Thus the dead man only gets a moment of weeping from his relatives. The grave is closed for thousands of years, while thousands of years are juxtaposed with a moment of

⁹⁰ *The Age of Eternal Brilliance: Three Lyric Poets of the Yung-ming Era (483-493)*, 2.138.

⁹¹ “Guanju” 關雎, see *Maoshi zhengyi*, 1.21.

⁹² *Wenxuan*, 28. 36-37.

weeping. This comparison is the saddest thing in the world.

Apart from the contrast of time, he also notices one particular moment in the poem, the moment when the grave is ready to close yet has not closed. The moment, he believes, is written in the couplet “The horse neighs to the sky, Winds whistle itself.” The horse realizes that the master will be buried, so he neighs to the sky as if showing his memory of the master.

In his discussion of Han poems, Wu Qi talks more about one moment. When he discusses parting poems attributed to Su Wu and Li Ling, he points out the meaning of parting moment as follows.

Only the moment of being ready to part yet not having parted is the realm that is extremely cramped and extremely urgent, and most difficult to write. The ancients just touch their brushes on this point. It is indeed what is called to build a world on lands like dust-motes. ... When they touch brushes before parting and after parting, it just means that they touch brushes on the moment of ready to part yet not having parted. When later poets write parting poems, please do not look for convenience and only touch brushes on wide space.

惟欲別未別之一刻。境界逼甚促甚。最難著筆。古人偏于此處著筆者。正所謂於塵刹上立世界也。... 其於別之前後著筆。正於欲別未別之一刻著筆也。後之作別詩者。幸勿趨便。只於寬處著筆爾 (3.16).

Wu Qi emphasizes the ephemeral moment in poems, and believes it is that moment that becomes the focus of poems. The focused and intensified moment is elongated when poets extend to write events before and after the moment. By doing so, the moment lingers, and all events push forward to it and give force to it.

In Wu Qi's interpretation of Nineteen Old Poems, he says that Old Poems focus on one moment at present 凡現前一刻。古詩最重 (4.8). He cites from Xie Lingyun's poem “Entering the Third Valley of Mayuan Where Huazi Hill Stands” 入華子崗是麻源第三穀⁹³ one line “They always fulfill the needs of the fleeting moment” 恒充俄頃用 to explain what he means by one moment. In his interpretation of “Green, Green Grass by the River,” one moment at present

⁹³ *Wenxuan*, 26. 41.

refers to the moment when the female protagonist's eyes fall on green grass, and when the poet catches sight of both the grass and woman. Also, the poem says, "Once long ago I sang in the bar room, now I'm the wife of a traveling man." Wu Qi picks two words "once" and "now" which represent the extension of time in the poem, and says that the contrast of "once" and "now" forces the wonderful interest in the moment at present mentioned above. He further imagines in the position of the poet the linear movement that is implicit (or absent) in the poem, the time before the present moment, when the woman endures loneliness on an "empty bed." In this context, the present moment is the moment that carries ample connotations and signifies the female protagonist's self consciousness.

In "There is a Rare Tree in My Yard" 庭中有奇樹, the relationship of one moment and the extension of one moment is interpreted as follows.

There is a rare tree in my yard,
Green are its leaves, rich in flowers.
I pulled its boughs to pluck a bloom
To send to the one I love.
Sweet scent filled my gown and sleeves,
The way is too far to send it.
What value has the thing itself?
It only recalls how long since he left.
庭中有奇樹，綠葉發華滋。攀條折其榮，將以遺所思。
馨香盈懷袖，路遠莫致之。此物何足貴，但感別經時。⁹⁴

Being stirred by a long passage of time lies only in the moment of plucking a bloom and sending it to the lover. However, the poem must begin from a rare tree, and it is because that though the recall happens suddenly, the accumulation of time has been long.
經時之感，只在折榮相贈之一刻；而必自樹之奇說起者，以見感雖生於兜然，而時之積已久矣。
(4.16)

The word affection echoes the previous word thought. When feeling is preserved it is thought; when it is brought out it is a stirring. However, stirring is brought out because of time, and the change of time finds its indications in things. So the poem comes from the bloom to trace back to leaves, and from leaves to trace back to branches. Time always changes, so how can one not have stirrings? However, when things have not reached the summit of glory, time has also not reached the summit of change. Therefore there is thought yet not stirred. When the

⁹⁴ *Wenxuan*, 29.6. *Anthology*, 258.

bloom comes out from leaves, things have reached the summit of glory, and time has reached the summit of change. Though affection is stirred accidentally in a moment, reserves accumulated for long time are all collected in this moment.

感字應前思字，蘊之為思，發之為感。但感之發因于時，而時之變徵於物；故由榮而遡之葉，由葉而遡之條，時亦屢變，豈容無感？但物未極其盛，則時亦未極其變，故有思而無感。及其葉而榮矣，物盛極矣，時變極矣，感雖發於偶爾之一頃，而從前積累之蘊，都撮聚於此一頃矣。(4.17)

Wu Qi's interpretation can be read against the background of Jin Shengtan's interpretation of *Xixiang ji*.

The wonderful part of texts is that when a writer's eyes fix on one point he does not write this point yet writes from the distance to the point. Windingly and meanderingly, when he writes close to the point he stops. Once again he begins to write in distance, and again to the point. Again, windingly and meanderingly, when he writes close to the point he stops. He repeats this several times. At all times he begins in the distance, and windingly and meanderingly he stops when close to the point. He does not further write the point where his eyes fix. His writing makes readers themselves glimpse at the point beyond the text.

文章最妙。是目注此處，卻不便寫，卻去遠遠處發來。迤邐寫到將至時，便且住。卻重去遠遠處更端，再發來。再迤邐又寫到將至處，便又且住。如是更端數番，皆去遠遠處發來，迤邐寫到將至時，即便住。更不復寫出目所注處，使人自于文外瞥然親見。⁹⁵

Though Wu Qi does not follow the repetition of writing from the distance to the fixed point, which seems impractical in a short poem, and he does not say that the fixed point should only be implied, the similarity between Jin Shengtan and Wu Qi is that they both believe that there is a suggestive moment in literary texts. Jin Shengtan emphasizes that the writer should begin writing faraway in the distance to that moment, while Wu Qi sees the distant moment implicit in the immediate moment. Wu Qi's interpretation focuses on the relationship between the moment when the protagonist, the woman who recalls long time her lover has left, plucks the bloom and the long process of tree blooming. He seems to read the poem as a dramatic narrative that has its climax and foreshadowing. The climax, which in Wu Qi's word is that "things reach the summit of glory" (*dun* 頓), happens in one moment, but it is supported and enriched by the accumulation of previous moments (*jian* 漸). The climax moment is pregnant with previous moments and gives

⁹⁵ This the 16th item in Jin Shengtan's "Methods of Reading *Xixiang ji* the Sixth Book by a Talented Man" 讀第六才子書西廂記法. See *Guanhuatang diliu caizishu*, 12.

birth to moments afterward, and the poem just stops at this moment.

In his interpretation, Wu Qi transforms binary literary terms scene and feeling into a triangle relationship: things, time and affection. The consensus that scene stirs feeling does not change much in this new chart, but becomes more delicate. Things (a rare tree), which correspond to scene, change through the time, and when changes are accumulated to the summit, feeling is stirred and becomes affection. Wu Qi's strong interest in dividing one term into finer semantic units happens here again. He divides feeling into thought (*si* 思) and affection (*gan* 感).⁹⁶ Thought is reserved and restrained feeling, and continues through long time when the tree changes its form. Its characteristic is accumulative. Affection is stirred feeling, bursting forth when the tree blooms. Its characteristic is sudden.

4. Reading Drama

In Wu Qi's interpretation of "Green, Green Grass by the River," he uses a drama term "plot in a play" or "setting the stage" (*paichang* 排場) to describe the scenery description in the opening couplet. To regard the scene in poetry as the backdrop in drama is one of Wu Qi's critical characteristics. In his interpretation of Tao Yuanming's "Bearers' Song", he uses this term again.

Before they send the dead person to the suburb, first a dramatic backdrop is set up outside the desolate suburb. It is hard to know how many people from the ancient to the present have been sent to this place after death.

於未送之先. 先於荒郊之外立下一個排場... 不知此中往古來今已不知斷送過多少人矣. (11.49)

In some poems though Wu Qi does not use dramatic terms directly, he puts himself in the position of characters and imagines breaking through the boundary between the stage and reality.

The following poem is "A Good Feast Today" 今日良宴會.

A good feast brings us together today,
of such revels and mirth it is hard to tell all.
The harp is struck, the notes rise free,

⁹⁶ Notice that Wu Qi also divides intention (*zhi*) into concept (*yi*) and thought (*si*).

new tunes so fine they touch the gods.
 Those with virtue sing high words,
 those skilled in song will hear what's true.
 All of one heart, we share the same wish,
 But the thought is withheld, not fully shown.
 Man is born into only one time,
 a sudden thing, dust whirled in the wind.
 So why not whip your fine steed on,
 seize a stronghold before some other?
 Don't stay a common man and poor,
 Ever in hardship, always beaten down.
 今日良宴會，歡樂難具陳。彈箏奮逸響，新聲妙入神。
 令德唱高言，識曲聽其真。齊心同所願，含意俱未申。
 人生寄一世，奄忽若飄塵。何不策高足，先據要路津。無為守窮賤，轆轤長苦辛。⁹⁷

Wu Qi's interpretation of this poem is unique, in that he believes its meaning is to find the one who truly understands the beauty's musical tone. He invites readers to participate in his imagination.

Let's imagine that there is here a most beautiful woman among her contemporaries. How can she not want a most talented man to be her mate? As for people like me, how can they not want to be that man? However, they either think themselves not talented, or they are prevented by momentum and obstructed by ritual, so they cannot become that man. How can they not want a talented man to be her pair? It is the same as they themselves become that man. If one cannot get to be such a man, they are gloomy and their wish is not shown. ... So the poem says, "All of one heart, we share the same wish. But the thought is withheld, not fully shown."

設有一絕代佳人在此。未嘗不欲得一絕代才子而當之。其在我人。亦未嘗不欲以己當之也。然自念己或非才子。或格於勢。阻於禮。而不得當焉。亦未嘗不欲得一絕代才子當之。猶己當之也。苟不得其人。則鬱鬱不伸... 故曰。同心齊所願。含意俱未伸。(4.10-11)

It seems that Wu Qi projects his own experience of watching or reading scholar-beauty drama or novel on an old poem. He thinks that the one who strikes the harp is the beauty, and all men in the feast share the same wish of becoming that talented scholar. As a reader, he imagines himself entering that dramatic scene, becoming one of the characters, and discovering both those men's and his own withheld desire.

In his interpretation of "The Eastern Wall is High and Long" 東城高且長, Wu Qi discusses the

⁹⁷ Ibid., 29. 3. *Anthology*, 255.

behavior of male and female protagonists in the poem as if they are actors on the stage. The second part of the poem is as follows.

There are many fair women from Yan and Zhao,
the most beautiful have complexions like jade.
They are clothed in gossamer skirts and gowns,
at their doors they practice clear melodies.
How sad the music's echoes are---
from the high-pitched strings one knows the pegs are set tight.
Passions gallop, I straighten kerchief and sash,
brooding, I pause there awhile.
I wish we could be a pair of swallows in flight,
mud in beaks to make a nest in your roof.

燕趙多佳人，美者顏如玉。被服羅裳衣，當戶理清曲。
音響一何悲，絃急知柱促。馳情整中帶，沈吟聊躑躅。思為雙飛鸞，銜泥巢君屋。⁹⁸

The poem says, “beauty,” clearly there is someone who has chosen her; it says, “one knows the pegs are set tight,” clearly there is someone listening to her; it says, “straighten kerchief and sash,” clearly there is someone looking at him; it says, “linger there for a while,” clearly there is someone urging him.

曰美者。分明有個人選他。曰知柱促。分明有個人聽他。曰整巾帶。分明有個人看他。曰聊躑躅。分明有個人促他。(4.23)

In Lu Ji's “Imitating To the Northwest Stands a High Tower” 擬西北有高樓, two couplets are “I stand long, gazing on the sun's declination, pausing uncertain, I sigh repeatedly. I don't resent standing there so long, I want only that the singer feel joy”⁹⁹ 佇立望日昃。躑躅再三歎。不怨佇立久。但願歌者歡,¹⁰⁰ which describe that a listener is attracted by a fair lady's music. Wu Qi elaborates on the character *tan* 歎, saying it does not only mean to sigh, but also to harmonize with music, as in the idiom “one begins to sing and others join in and echo” 一唱三歎. Wu Qi's interpretative aim is not just a clever reading of this word, but to create a vivid dramatic scene between the listener and the fair lady.

It is because that at first the fair lady plays zither accidentally, but later she plays it

⁹⁸ *Wenxuan*, 29. 7-8. Translation is from *The Making of Early Chinese Classical Poetry*, 265.

⁹⁹ Translation is from *The Making of Chinese Classical Poetry*, 279.

¹⁰⁰ *Wenxuan*, 30. 36.

deliberately. ... To sigh means to harmonize with music. The man under the tower not only gazes on the tower vainly, but he also continues harmonizing with music. Therefore how can the fair lady on the tower not know that the man is harmonizing with music for her? Because the fair lady gets the one who truly understands the tone, she also hesitates and does not leave. 蓋先前是無意偶彈. 後來是有意故彈... 歎者和也. 樓下之人不止空望. 兼且廣和. 則樓上之佳人. 豈有不知正為他歎. 得知音. 故佳人亦徘徊不去. (10.36)

Wu Qi's familiarity with drama can be seen in the following interpretation of Xie Tiao's poem "Harmonizing with Chief Recorder Wang's Poem, 'Feelings of Resentment'" 和王主簿怨情.¹⁰¹

He discusses how one couplet that describes details in nature is relevant to the theme "feelings of resentment." The couplet is "Amid the flowering thicket flutter several butterflies; in through the wind-blown blind enters a pair of swallows"¹⁰² 花叢亂數蝶, 風簾入雙燕. Butterflies and swallows are standard images of love, so they imply loneliness in the heart of an abandoned woman written in the poem. Wu Qi, however, provides a different explanation.

Resentment does not come from big things, nor does it come from many things. It is from things that break heart. Therefore the brokenhearted resentment often comes from the extremely tiny. Therefore when we encounter the extremely tiny things and tiny scenes, often resentment is stirred. It is because that though resentment belongs to anger, the root of infatuation couches in it. Resentment is born from infatuation, and that is why Tang Ruoshi transmitted *Soul Returns*. Infatuation is born from resentment, and that is why he transmitted *The Purple Hairpin*. Several butterflies and a pair of swallows are tiny things. Flowering thicket and wind-blown blind are tiny places. The poem says "flutter" and "enter," thus to put small scenery flavors together.

怨不在大. 亦不在多. 期於傷心. 故傷心之怨. 每起於至微. 故每每遇至微之物. 至微之景. 觸之而發者. 蓋怨雖屬嗔. 而中伏癡根故也. 夫癡而怨. 湯若士所以傳還魂也. 怨而癡. 所以傳紫釵也. 夫數蝶雙燕. 物之微者. 花叢風簾. 地之微者. 曰亂曰入. 湊成小小景趣. (15.11)

Soul Returns, also titled *The Peony Pavilion* 牡丹亭, and *The Purple Hairpin* are two famous plays written by Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖 (1550-1616). Wu Qi is inspired by the relationship of resentment and infatuation in two plays, and uses it to interpret how tiny things stir resentment.

Like the paradox of far distance and closeness, there is also a paradox of sadness and pleasure.

¹⁰¹ Wenxuan, 30. 25-26.

¹⁰² *The Age of Eternal Brilliance: Three Lyric Poets of the Yung-ming Era (483-493)*, 2. 19.

One can make pleasure from sadness, and one can also seek relief from sadness by doubling sadness. Finally, there is Xie Lingyin's poem, "On the Way I Recall Those in the Mountain," an example of how Wu Qi worries about the ancient's suffering. The rhetoric he uses frequently in interpretations shows that to embrace sadness is simultaneously a way to escape from sadness.

The song of plucking water chestnut easily becomes high pitched melody,
The ballad of southland is not relaxed.
Once a Chu man's (Qu Yuan) heart was broken,
Now I, a visitor from Yue, am grieved.
Though we are grieved by different thoughts,
We are both touched by homesickness.
Recalling your home, your thoughts are accumulated deeply,
Remembering the mountain, I am resentful.
I seek the moment when I lived in reclusion,
Facing upward or downward,
I indulge in my will without restraint.
I get my nature, and do not pursue anything externally,
I stop myself naturally, and who else brings it (stop) to me?
I don't blame that autumn night is long,
I am often depressed that summer day is short.
I wash in the stream, and floating rapids surge.
I have a rest under the tree shade, leaning against dense bamboos.
I think of the past, and new scenery cannot give me pleasure,
I harbor sadness, and forget warm spring.
Bleak is the flute song "Bright Moon,"
Dolorous is the zither song "Guangling san."
Let the tight pegs of the zither pour forth my deep affection,
and intense sound of the flute express my vehement feeling.

采菱調易急，江南歌不緩。楚人心昔絕，越客腸今斷。
斷絕雖殊念，俱為歸慮款。存鄉爾思積，憶山我憤懣。
追尋棲息時，偃臥任縱誕。得性非外求，自己為誰纂？
不怨秋夕長，常苦夏日短。濯流激浮湍，息陰倚密竿。
懷故叵新歡，含悲忘春煖。悽悽明月吹，惻惻廣陵散。殷勤訴危柱，慷慨命促管！¹⁰³

When readers come to this point, they certainly think that the poet would stop singing and stop playing the flute. However, here it is not such. The poet just begins to make a new song, and the song should be more refined than before. Why? All the sad people in the world are all the people with strong feeling. Under Heaven only affectionate people are good at holding sadness, and only affectionate people are good at diverting themselves from sadness. Therefore there is a way of using pleasure to divert oneself from sadness, and there is a way of using sadness to divert oneself from sadness... As for people under Heaven who have the

¹⁰³ *Wenxuan*, 26. 39-40.

deepest affection, they never avoid sadness. Not only do they not avoid sadness, but they also invite sadness. For instance, once Ruan Ji (Sizong) is extremely sad, he just finds a dead end to wail. This is also a way of diverting himself from sadness. Kangle's method is like Ruan's. Therefore after his heart is broken by songs, he further plays music... Moreover, he doubles desolation by writing the musical instrument; moreover, he doubles desolation by writing the one who plays the music... It is again the one who has the deepest affection uses sadness to divert himself from sadness.

讀詩者至此. 定謂其停歌罷吹矣. 今卻不然. 偏要從新作起. 且要比前番更精. 何也. 凡天下愁人. 皆天下之有情人也. 天下惟有情人善於攬愁. 亦惟有情人善於遣愁. 故有以歡遣愁者. 更有以愁遣愁者... 若天下至情之人. 從不避愁. 豈惟不避. 且更相兜. 如阮嗣宗每逢愁絕. 偏要尋著窮途痛哭. 此又一遣愁法也. 康樂正同阮法. 故于聞歌斷腸之後. 更起絲竹... 又從發音之器上加寫一倍淒惻... 又於作音之人上加寫一倍淒惻... 此又至情之人以愁遣愁也. (14.25)

Chapter Three

Catching Shadows: Wang Fuzhi's 王夫之 (1619-1692) Lyrics and Commentary on Poetry

“All the world’s stage, / And all the men and women merely players; / They have their exits and their entrances.” These are the beginning lines of a monologue from William Shakespeare’s (1564-1616) comedy *As You Like It*.¹ Roughly around the same time, the idea that the world is a stage and life is a play was popular among late Ming literati. In Shakespeare’s speech, men and women are actors because they play different roles during different stages of their lives. Late Ming literati discussed other dimensions of theater metaphors in addition to the one pointed out in Shakespeare’s speech. Early Qing literati inherited the late Ming expositions of theater metaphors and reinterpreted them in accord with the aftermath of the political turmoil during the Ming-Qing divide. This chapter examines Wang Fuzhi’s (1619-1692) lyrics on shadows (including his lyrics on the skeleton/soul—an equivalent of shadow) and his critical term “catching shadow” 取影 that involves his thoughts on the relationship between life and theater. I will first outline late Ming expositions of theater metaphors and use them as a cultural context in which to understand Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows. Second, I will interpret Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows against the backdrop of the history of Chinese shadow play. Third, I will interpret Wang Fuzhi’s poetry commentary and explain the way it sheds light on his lyrics. Finally, I will discuss Wang Fuzhi’s knowledge of the cognitive theory of Buddhism and argue that theatrical shadows in his lyrics construct objects of consciousness 境 as defined within the Consciousness-only 唯識 school.

¹ The prevalence of theatrical metaphors is not an isolated cultural phenomenon. In *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), Ernst Robert Curtius’ (1886-1956) discusses theatrical metaphors in medieval European literature.

Life as a Play

The influence of theatrical culture permeated every fiber of late Ming society; phrases from play, playing roles, and watching plays became associated with professions and human behaviors that were distant from the theater, such as politics, officialdom, courtship, reading books, etc.² Because theater could be a means of interpreting almost every other aspect of life, late Ming literati articulated the idea that the world is a Pear Garden—a synonym for the theater—and that life is a play.³ The idea captured some essential characteristics of life and added new meanings to the then-established metaphor for life. It evoked a more traditional metaphor of life as a dream, which is as illusory and ephemeral as a play, and contributed to the conflation of these two metaphors thereafter. If the metaphor of life as a dream expressed the anxiety of the ultimate emptiness of life, the metaphor of life as a play conveyed late Ming literati's thoughts on the issues of agency and free will in an age that witnessed the decline of the dynasty and the corruption of officialdom.

In a play, the roles, plots, and feelings to be expressed are all predetermined. Actors recite scripts, and once the play starts they cannot stop playing until it ends. In this sense, the idea that life is a play means that life is programmed. An additional constraint borne by the actors in Chinese traditional drama is its six role types: the male lead *sheng* 生, the female lead *dan* 旦, the aged male character *wai* 外, the middle-aged male character *mo* 末, the clown *chou* 丑, and the character with painted facial make-up *jing* 淨. The idea that everyone is an actor means that

² Goyama Kiwamu 合山究 has a detailed analysis of this issue. See his “明末清初における‘人生はドラマである’の説,” in *Chūgoku tetsugakushi kenkyū ronshū: Araki Kyōju taikyū kinen* 荒木教授退休纪念中国哲学史研究论集 (Fukuoka-shi: Ashi Shobō 福岡市: 苇书房, 1981), pp. 619-34.

³ Zhou Lianggong 周亮工 (1612-1672), *Laigutang chidu jielingji* 赖古堂尺牍结邻集, vol. 12. The metaphor of life as a play has appeared since the Tang Dynasty, but it is during the period of the late Ming and the Ming-Qing divide that the idea was theorized and became a trend in thinking. See Goyama Kiwamu, “明末清初における‘人生はドラマである’の説.”

everyone must play a set role type in a predetermined play, thus profoundly capturing the idea that life is not in the control of one's free will. Many late Ming literati specifically compared human beings to puppets, further emphasizing the issue of the loss of agency. "The world is a Pear Garden, and the human beings are puppets. Once we play roles on a stage, no matter what the plot is—grief, joy, separation, or union—we have to fully fulfill the billing. We cannot stop playing until the song ends and the audience leaves." 大地梨園, 人生傀儡, 但使登場扮演, 無論悲歡離合, 務使各盡關目, 曲終人散而後止。⁴ "Since the Creator opens this theater, he has no choice but to put up a puppet show. The puppets are indeed ignorant. If they understood this, they would beat their chests and flee the stage." 造物既開了此個戲場, 不得不弄這一場傀儡. 這夥傀儡實是無知, 若是有知, 則換手搥胸, 竄下戲場去也。⁵ The creator of the universe is the one who writes the scripts for the theater of life and pulls the strings of puppets. Late Ming literati also described another form of the great creator/controller in the world: fame and profit. Wang Yangming's 王陽明 (1472-1529) poem "Watching a Puppet Play, Rhyming with a Companion Piece" 觀傀儡次韻 is an example, where the strings pulling puppets are in the hands of fame and profit.

Wherever we meet there is a stage,
 Why bother to have puppets entering the hall at night?
 A glimpse of glamour, the urgent sound of the third watch of night,
 People are pulled by long threads of fame and profit.
 Young ones must be so surprised that they vie to talk about it,
 Short people grieve in vain for what they cannot see.⁶
 Who has ever known the real face (of players)?
 Let's learn from Jieyu, the mad man of Chu,⁷ and drink from the goblets in front of us.

⁴ Cheng Wenlin 程文林 (d.1562), "In My Illness I Wrote This to My Fourth Elder Brother" 病中留別寧野四兄, in *Laigutang chidu jielingji*, vol. 12.

⁵ Kun Can, "Reply to Zhang Yaoxing" 答張瑤星, in Zhou Lianggong, *Cangquji* 藏弄集, vol. 11. Zhang Yaoxing appears in Kong Shangren's drama *The Peach Blossom Fan* as the Taoist who enlightens two protagonists.

⁶ Short people cannot see what happens on the stage, so they cannot form their own opinions and must imitate the reactions others have to the show.

⁷ Jieyu 接輿 is the ancient crazy person in the Chu state. He suggests that Confucius should not serve in the state in the *Analects*, 18.5.

處處相逢是戲場，何須傀儡夜登堂。繁華過眼三更促，名利牽人一線長。
稚子自應爭詫說，矮人亦復浪悲傷。本來面目何曾識，且向尊前學楚狂。

The sarcasm of life as a puppet play especially targeted politics. In many speeches, high officials and emperors are called puppets, officialdom is a realm of puppets, and official histories that primarily consist of the events and lives of emperors and high officials are nothing but plays. Wang Yangming's widely quoted speech "The nine stanzas of the *Shao*⁸ and the nine variations of the *Wu*⁹ are Emperor Wu's plays" 韶之九成，武之九變，便是武王的一本戲子¹⁰ is one of the earliest examples in this case. Wang Yangming expressed the dramatic characteristic of politics and the importance of theater in emulating history, but during the period of the Ming-Qing divide, similar speeches focused more on satirizing politics, its participants, and its histories, such as the first couplet from You Tong's 尤侗 (1618-1704) famous antithetical couplet, "The world is a small Pear Garden, where emperors and prime ministers are puppets pulled by threads. Twenty-one histories are elaborated in one play." 世界小梨園，牽帝王師相為傀儡；二十一史，演成一部傳奇。¹¹

The idea that life is a play can be meant as political critique, but it also implies a playful attitude toward life. Since life is illusory and ephemeral like a play, why should one be serious about it and why not simply enjoy its entertaining aspect? These thoughts also echo Buddhist teaching. Kun Can 髡殘 (1612-1685), considered as one of the four renowned monk-painters in the early Qing, expressed the association between the idea and Buddhism in his private letter.

⁸ The *Shao* is the name of ancient music in the time of Emperor Shun celebrating his administration.

⁹ The *Wu* is the name of ancient music in the time of Emperor Wu celebrating his accomplishments.

¹⁰ Wang Yangming, *Chuanxilu* 傳習錄, in *Wang Yangming quanji* 王陽明全集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), p. 87.

¹¹ You Tong, "Fragmented Words of the Fifth and the Ninth Months" 五九枝譚 in *Xitangzazuyiji* 西堂雜俎一集, vol.8.

Once we were born, we started to perform in a play, which has grief, joy, separation and union. From the saints and worthies to ordinary and stupid people, no one can be outside the circle of the theater. Only when you are exhausted like a burned-out lamp can you let go. Our Buddha and Bodhisattva teach that the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness, and death are all the events inside the theater. Only perceptive people brush by them lightly, and don't take them as the real Heaven and Hell. Both delightful and fearful events in life are the same as paintings made by my brush.

人生墮地來，便上了此一本戲文，有悲有歡，有離有合。自聖凡賢愚，皆不能出此戲場圈子也。只要你做到燈盡油干時，方才脫手。我佛菩薩說生老病死苦，總是戲場內事，只是明眼底人，輕輕挨過，都不要認真地獄天堂。可喜可懼事，都如我個毛錐子畫出來相似。¹²

That Buddhist monks use the metaphor of life as a play to enlighten listeners has appeared since the Song Dynasty.¹³ During the turmoil of the late Ming and the Ming-Qing divide, monks especially used the metaphor to express the idea of transcending suffering and death. Kun Can's speech states that life, like plays and painting, is illusory and human beings should take a playful attitude to every happening in life. Kun Can's teacher, Juelang Daosheng 覺浪道盛, the Zen master of Caodong school 曹洞 in the late Ming, summarized the same idea in the pithy phrase "coming out of death and entering life, treating both ordinary people and enlightened sages playfully" 出死入生，遊戲凡聖，¹⁴ meaning that those who truly understand the theatrical nature of life can achieve the supernatural of Buddhism to enlighten human beings as well as transcend the limits of life and death. The idea of life as a play resonates with both Buddhism and *Zhuangzi* 莊子, exemplifying the new combination of theoretical traditions and theatrical culture. This resonance is best summarized by Zou Diguang 鄒迪光 (1549-?) in "On Watching Drama" 觀演劇說. "This play is what Buddha means by illusion, what Zhuangzi means by dream, and what

¹² Kun Can, "Letter to Householder (Buddhism) Chen Yuanshu" 與陳原舒居士, in Zhou Lianggong, *Cangquji*, vol. 11.

¹³ See Liao Zhaoheng 廖肇亨. *Zhongbian shichan mengxi: Mingmo qingchu fojiao wenhua lunshu de chengxian yu kaizhan* 中邊 詩禪 夢戲：明末清初佛教文化論述的呈現與開展 (Taipei: Yunchen, 2008), chapter 9. My discussion of the association between the metaphor of life as a play and Buddhism is based on his research.

¹⁴ *Tianjie juefang chanshi quanlu* 天界覺浪禪師全錄, in *Mingban Jiaying dazangjing* 明版嘉興大藏經, 34, vol. 25, pp. 24-5.

Mencius means by the false.” 此一戲也，瞿曇氏之謂幻，漆園氏之謂夢，子輿氏之謂假。¹⁵ This combination is represented well by Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics, as will be detailed later in the paper.

Wang Fuzhi’s Lyrics on Shadow Play

In the late 1680s or the early 1690s, a few years before his death,¹⁶ Wang Fuzhi wrote a group of fourteen lyrics on the theme of shadow. At the time, he lived as a recluse in his last residence in the Thatched Hall of Western Xiang 湘西草堂 in modern Hunan province. All but one of the lyrics are set to the tune of “The Charms of Niannu” 念奴嬌. The objects observed include the pine tree, willow, bamboo, plum blossom, wild geese, butterflies, clouds, waves, curtain, sail, shadow play, revolving scenic lantern, sunlight cast on the paper window, and the poet himself. While only one lyric is titled “The Shadow of Shadow Play” 影戲影, in a broad sense, all fourteen lyrics are about the play of shadows, and all the lyrics weave the playful dimension of shadow play with the enlightenment evoked by shadow play.

In order to understand the combination of entertainment with enlightenment in Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadow play, it is necessary to give a brief summary of the history of Chinese shadow play and its roots in Buddhism.¹⁷ Based on Song Dynasty scholar Gao Cheng’s 高承 (ca. 1080) research in *Shiwu jiyuan* 事物紀原, it is widely believed that Chinese shadow play has its ancient origins in the story of conjuring the apparition/shadow of a deceased consort of Emperor Wu 武

¹⁵ Zou Diguang, *Yuyilouji* 郁儀樓集, vol. 42, pp. 6-9.

¹⁶ Peng Jing 彭靖, *Wang Chuanshan ci biannian jianzhu* 王船山詞編年箋注 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2004), p.183.

¹⁷ As for studies on shadow play, see Sun Kaidi 孫楷第, *Kuileixi kaoyuan* 傀儡戲考原 (Shanghai: Shangzha chubanshe, 1952); *Science and Civilization in China*, vol. 4, part I, pp. 122-23; Fan Pen Chen, “Shadow Theater of the World,” in *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol. 62, no. 1 (2003), pp. 25-64; Kang Baocheng 康保成, “Fojiao yu zhongguo piyingxi de fazhan” 佛教与中国皮影戏的发展, in *Wenyi yanjiu* 文艺研究, no. 5 (2003), pp. 87-92. Scholars still debate whether puppet plays are indigenous Chinese creations or were influenced by Indian or central Asian puppet plays.

帝 (r. 140-86 BCE) during the Han Dynasty. The story is recorded in Ban Gu's 班固 (32-92) *Hanshu* 汉书 under "Accounts of the Families Related to the Emperors by Marriage" 外戚传.¹⁸ According to Sun Kaidi's 孙楷第 (1898-1989) research, the practice of preaching Buddhist Dharma led to the popularity of shadow play during the Tang Dynasty, because shadow play could serve as a means of preaching the Buddhist Dharma of transmigration and retribution. Monks in charge of preaching at public services used the shadows cast by paper or leather figures as substitutes for the souls of the dead when they prayed for the expiation of the sins of the dead. The monks' lectures that accompanied the performances can be considered to be prototypes for the texts of later shadow plays, called speeches on shadows 影詞. Shadow plays prospered during the Song Dynasty, gradually disassociated from Buddhist sermons, and became a type of folk art that was combined with other forms of popular entertainment consisting of singing and dancing. Performers of shadow plays moved figures and stage props made of paper or leather with sticks or strings attached to them. The interplay of darkness and light, brilliance and obscurity was achieved by casting the shadows of miniature figures on a screen or wall. The age also witnessed "big shadow play" 大影戲 that featured the shadows of real people. Another name for "big shadow play" is "comical shadow play" 喬影戲¹⁹, indicating that shadow plays performed by real people were primarily comical.²⁰

The fact that Chinese shadow play was associated with Buddhism in its earliest form indicates that shadow play could be used as a means of achieving knowledge and truth.²¹ While the

¹⁸ *Science and Civilization in China*, p. 122.

¹⁹ Sun Kaidi suggests that *qiao* 喬 here should mean comical. *Kuileixi kaoyuan*, p. 67.

²⁰ Sun Kaidi, *Kuileixi kaoyuan*, pp.62-72.

²¹ An interesting analogy exists between Plato's allegory of the cave and Chinese shadow play. Plato imagines a group of people imprisoned in a cavernous cell under the ground. The people face a blank wall, and watch shadows

material world is inferior to the world of consciousness in Buddhism, Buddhist icons are worshipped, and the Buddhist teaching that the world is illusory is ironically dependent on the display of various forms of illusion.²² Buddha's image is called Buddha's shadow 佛影. Accounts of the teachings of Buddha's shadow can be found in many Buddhist sutras and these accounts indicate a dramatic feature of Buddhist teachings comparable to shadow plays. In *Jing lü yi xiang* 經律異相, there is a description of the preachments by Buddha's shadow.

Buddha sat in the grotto to make eighteen transformations. He leapt into the rock. It was as if there was a mirror in the rock, and the shadow was reflected outside the rock. The shadow was visible when it was viewed from far, and invisible upon close inspection. Ten thousands of gods worshipped the shadow, and the shadow also preached the law.
佛坐窟中作十八變，躡身入石，猶如明鏡在於石內，影現於外。遠望則見，近視則無。諸天百千，供養佛影，影亦說法。²³

In *Mahāprajñāparamitā-sūtra* 大般若波羅蜜多經, translated by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664), a person of light and shadow 光影人, who must be the reflection of a puppet, teaches the empty nature of life.²⁴

The idea of life as a play and the association between Buddhist teaching and shadow plays must have influenced Wang Fuzhi's choice of shadow as a lyrical theme to explore the

projected on the wall by things passing in front of a fire behind them. The shadows of artifacts constitute the only reality they recognize. Plato explains that the philosopher is like a prisoner who is freed from the cave and understands that the shadows on the wall are not reality. The allegory is related to Plato's theory of forms. Shadows symbolize the material world of change known through sensation. Plato believes that not the material world but forms/ideas possess the highest reality. Plato, *Republic*, Book VII, in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (New York: Norton, 2001), pp. 64-67.

²² The denial of the material world and sensation is shown in the standard cosmology of Buddhism that divides the universe into three realms: the realm of desire (kāmadhātu), the realm of form (rūpadhātu), and the formless realm (arūpyadhātu). The realm of desire is the universe inhabited by humans, all manner of animal and insect life, as well as a class called *pretas*, translated as hungry ghosts. The realm of form is situated above the realm of desire and is regarded as superior to it. The beings here are gods who experience the pleasures of sight, sound, and touch, but not taste and smell. The formless realm is more sublime, where gods exist in states of pure consciousness, without bodies and sense organs. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. *Buddhism in Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 65-66.

²³ *Jing lü yi xiang* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1988), vol. 6. T2121_53.30c.

²⁴ Takakusu Junjirō & Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō*, 85 vols. Tokyo, 1924-32, 7:976b, 978b (thereafter T).

philosophical issues of self, life, and death. But it must also be pointed out that Buddhism is not the only philosophical source of these lyrics. Wang Fuzhi wrote *Interpretations of Zhuangzi* 莊子解 in the 1680s, and it is no surprise that the influence of *Zhuangzi* can be found everywhere in these lyrics written roughly at the same time. I will begin my analysis with the lyric on his own shadow “The Shadow of Jiangzhai” 姜齋影, the preface of which reveals his aim of writing lyrics on shadows.

I have been ill for months, and dismissed everything. This wizened man sits close to the fire, and his heart has nowhere to lodge. Therefore I playfully write a couple of lyrics on shadow to draw a wisp of living breath, not letting it disperse.

衰病弥月，一切尽遣。拥火枯坐，心无所寄。因戏作诸影词，引半缕活气，令不分散。

When the aged, ill poet has nowhere to lodge his mind, observing shadows becomes an entertainment to keep him alive. Haunted by his decrepitude and incipient death, he claims to write lyrics playfully. The odd mixture of tragedy and comedy, recognizing pain and counteracting it with playfulness, is the backdrop of and the key to these lyrics. The preface continues:

Under the solitary lamp I suddenly see the shadow of my declining body on the wall. Because of that I think of how we all know that the shadow cannot exist without the self, but we don't know that the self cannot exist without the shadow. I value my lingering shadow, and therefore write a lyric for it.

孤灯下忽见婆娑在壁。因念人知非我之无彼，不知非彼之无我也。流连珍重，旋与评唱一阙。

Apparently, Tao Yuanming's 陶淵明 (ca.369-427) stands behind the preface. In Tao Yuanming's canonical poems on body, shadow, and soul, body and shadow lament ephemeral life and decide to take refuge in wine.²⁵ In the preface to his poem “The Movement of Time” 時運, Tao Yuanming writes “I travel alone with my shadow as my companion; happiness and lament fill

²⁵ The first two poems “Body to Shadow” 形贈影 and “Shadow Replies Body” 影答形 from “Body, Shadow, Soul” 形影神, *Tao Yuanming ji jiaojian* 陶淵明集校箋 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1996), p. 59-63.

my mind.” 偶景獨游，欣慨交心。²⁶ Shadow is either a philosophical interlocutor of body to discover a solution to the brevity of life, or a sympathetic companion to comfort the loneliness of self. These implications can also be found in Wang Fuzhi’s preface. “We all know that the other cannot exist without the self, but we don’t know that the self cannot exist without the other.” This line is an allusion to *Zhuangzi*, “Without an Other there is no Self, without Self no choosing one thing rather than another” 非彼無我，非我無所取。²⁷ The meaning of “Other” in this speech has been open to debate among scholars. While the fourth-century commentator Guo Xiang’s 郭象 (d.312 C.E.) explication of “Other” as nature has been widely accepted, some scholars suggest it refers to human feelings mentioned prior to the quoted line.²⁸ Wang Fuzhi’s allusion to *Zhuangzi* rewrites “Other” as shadow. It is shadow, rather than nature or human feelings, that defines self. This rewriting reflects Wang Fuzhi’s thoughts on what *Zhuangzi* means by “something genuinely in command” 真宰, the invisible dominator of life, and the same thoughts can be found in his other lyrics on shadows.

If the preface alludes to ancient classics, the lyric is like a “speech of shadow” written for a “big shadow play,” reflecting the more recent influence of theatrical culture.

Alas, the solitary lamp cannot help it,
On the broken wall,
it embarrasses me (to project my shadow).
Dragonflies on the autumn river, nowhere to stay,
Parched lotuses and withered willows are revealed.
In the picture, circles and crosses, black and white,
The shadow wants to say something, but has no mouth.

²⁶ *Tao Yuanming ji jiaojian*, p. 7.

²⁷ *Zhuangzi*, chapter 2, “The Sorting Which Evens Things Out” 齊物論, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 55. English translation by Angus Graham, in *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. 1, p. 99.

²⁸ Modern scholar Chen Guying 陳鼓應 disagrees with Guo Xiang’s explication. He thinks that “Other” refers to the feelings mentioned prior to the line. See *Zhuangzi jinzhu jinyi* 莊子今注今譯, p. 46.

(He) should only laugh at me,
that for whom the cuckoo keeps crying until after spring.

The other day I was destitute in Cangwu²⁹.
Dark clouds in the low sky,
where I intended to hide my declining body.
The broken valley, the setting sun, under the withered tree,
I was under the surveillance (of my shadow).
The bun points to the sky, and white hair lightly touches the neck.
The black cap is still on the head.
When you (the shadow) are gone, would anyone else bear affinity to you?
孤灯无奈。向颓墙破壁，为余出丑。秋水蜻蜓无着处，全现败荷衰柳。画里圈叉，图中黑白，
欲说原无口。只应笑我，杜鹃啼到春后。
当日落魄苍梧，云暗天低，准拟藏衰朽。断岭斜阳枯树底，更与行监坐守。勾撮指天，霜丝拂
项。皂帽仍黏首。问君去日，有人还似君否？³⁰

The poet's obsession with his own shadow echoes the late Ming fascination with optical illusion and delight in its manipulation,³¹ but his shadow is not an object of desire as is Dong Xiaowan's 董小宛 reflection on the screen portrayed by Mao Xiang 冒襄 (1611-1693) in *Yingmeian yiyu* 影梅庵忆语. Nor is it a product of whimsical self-indulgence that Zhang Dai (1597-1679) describes in his nocturnal theatrical performance at Jin Mountain. Wang Fuzhi's observation of his shadow is a theatrical performance like the former two works that reflect the typical late Ming sensibility of impersonation and theatricality, but it is a performance that embarrasses the poet and that lacks an audience except for the poet himself.

In the first stanza, the poet sees the solitary lamp casting the shadow of his decrepit body on the broken wall, a scene that embarrasses him. In his imagination, his shadow first metamorphoses into a lost dragonfly unconsciously touching the surface of a river. Then, as if seen from the dragonfly's perspective, his shadow undergoes the second and third

²⁹ Cangwu County is in Guangxi province. It is different from Mount Cangwu in Hunan province, where it is said the ancient King Shun was buried.

³⁰ *Wang Chuanshan ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 182.

³¹ Waiyee Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment*, chapter 2 discusses this point.

metamorphoses into parched lotuses in the river and withered willows on the bank, two images implying his declining health. These visual illusions bear an affinity with the scenes of a silent black and white movie. The shadow cannot speak for itself or express the poet's mind. The shadow's mockery of the poet as a cuckoo, which is believed to be the soul of an ancient wise king and whose heartbreaking cry makes it a symbol of endless sorrow, expresses the poet's self-mockery of his perpetual lamentation over the irretrievable past.

In the second stanza, the current shadow transports the poet to the shadow ingrained in his memory of a past expedition. While the association between the expedition and Wang Fuzhi's participation in anti-Manchu political resistance is not declared, his reference to Cangwu county in Guangxi province corresponds to the itinerary of his travels between Zhu Youlang's 朱由榔 (r.1646-1662) southern Ming court and his hometown in Hunan province from 1648 to 1650. Wang Fuzhi fought against the Manchu army in Hengshan, Hunan province in 1648, and after his side was defeated, he fled to join Zhu Youlang's court in Zhaoqing, Guangdong province. In 1649 he left Zhaoqing, passing by Cangwu on his way back to Hengshan to take care of his mother, but soon left home for Zhaoqing again. Wang Fuzhi wrote several poems to record these expeditions, at least two of which mention Cangwu in the titles.³² "Destitution in Cangwu" in this lyric must refer to one of these expeditions. He recalls the setting sunlight casting his shadow on the ground and fancying it to be his surveillance. The fact that Wang Fuzhi probably undertook these expeditions alone and felt the despair of lacking like-minded friends to fulfill the goal of political resistance, explains the portrayal of his shadow as his single companion.

³² See Wang Zhichun 王之春, *Wang Fuzhi nianpu* 王夫之年譜 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), pp.39-41. Cangwu also alludes to *Chuci* 楚辭, from which Wang Fuzhi often draws imagery.

The shadow in “The Shadow of Jiangzhai” is the “double” of Wang Fuzhi. Looking at his shadow is almost the same as looking at his self-portrait or his reflection in a mirror. In his essay on “The ‘Uncanny,’” Sigmund Freud (1818-1939) associates several elements with the feeling of “uncanny.” One of them is the double—the doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self—and the double has connections with shadows, reflections in mirrors, the belief in the immortal soul, and the fear of death. The German *unheimlich* (uncanny) shares a meaning with its opposite *heimlich*. *Heimlich* (familiar) can mean “concealed, secret,” and thus the opposite of the familiar. This process of estrangement of the familiar also occurs in the phenomenon of the double. The invention of the double originally comes from self-love and the primary narcissism that dominates the mind of the child as preservation against extinction, but when this stage is surmounted, the double becomes the uncanny harbinger of death. This is because a mental agency is formed in the double, which stands against the rest of the ego, and which has the function of observing and criticizing the self and of exercising censorship within the mind. The double has ambivalent functions because the ego projects both its suppressed strivings and self-censorship in the double.³³ Freud’s analysis of the double sheds light on Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows, and we can say his shadow is uncanny. His shadow is his most intimate companion, the externalization of his soul, and makes him capable of self-observation. The shadow’s mockery of the self’s endless sorrow for the past and the feeling of the self under the surveillance of the shadow exactly illustrate the way that the self is aware of the function of judgment/censorship by the double. Observing his own shadow, the external proof of his existence, is both a way of expressing his yearning for life and a way of practicing self-censorship that is closely related to anxiety about looming death.

³³ Freud, “The ‘Uncanny,’” *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, pp. 929-41.

The second type of shadow involves the play of shadow in nature. I select two lyrics as examples. As we shall see, these lyrics also involve Wang Fuzhi's thoughts of life, death, and his solitude. The following lyric is on the shadow of a pine tree.

To "The Charms of Niannu": The Shadow of a Pine Tree 念奴嬌 松影

Towering into the clouds, vaguely drifting aloof,
The immortal stature of a Five-Needles pine,
Who can carefully number all the pine needles?
A soft mat made of half an acre of newly grown yellow grasses,
(The shadow of the tree) moves along the plain zither and icy frets.
Wisps and filaments,
Broken patterns are reflected,
Carefully writing a score of double purity.
The sparse sunlight is revealed,
Reclusive fragrance secretly lingers.

Suddenly clouds on the quiet western chamber are dispersed,
(The shadow of the tree) slowly ascends,
reaching the summit of meandering mountain ranges.
Drooping haze is fine and dense; (the shadow of the tree) becomes dark blue,
As if lowering to protect returning birds.
Fog is cold, and the mountain is empty,
A slanting gleam on a branch,
(the shadow) still on the road of seeking fragrance.
The setting sun is liable to disappear,
The light shade, (I'd) better take advantage of the time to go home.

擎云縹渺，有五鬣仙姿，憑誰細數？半頃黃茸茵藉軟，移上素琴冰柱。縷縷絲絲，斷紋交映，
細寫雙清譜。疏光逗漏，幽香幾許暗度。

一霎雲散西清，遲遲送上，到回巒高處。垂靄霏微深黛轉，似把歸禽低護。霧冷山空，一枝斜
閃，猶在尋香路。夕陽易沒，輕陰且趁歸去。³⁴

The lyric portrays the visual journey of the shadow of a pine tree along with the temporal changes of the day. This is the morning of a sunny day. The poet brings his zither and incense burner while wandering in the mountains. He chooses to sit on the grasses beside a towering pine tree, lights the incense, and plays the zither. The shadow of the pine tree first falls on the grasses, and then as the sunlight moves, it casts the shadow of the tree on the poet's zither and its frets. "Wisps and filaments, broken patterns are reflected; carefully writing a score of double purity;

³⁴ Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 196.

the sparse sunlight is revealed; reclusive fragrance secretly lingers.” The fantastic shadows of the pine needles flit across the poet’s zither, producing a momentary pattern of light and darkness. The wisps of light moving across the zither, the temporality of music, and the flow of incense all convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The time then moves to the afternoon, and the shadow of the pine tree slowly ascends onto the top of the mountain. When it becomes twilight, the shadow descends and its color is darker. Eventually the shadow becomes a small shade on the road.

The changes undergone by the shadow of the pine tree from the morning to the twilight can be read as an account of the shadow from its birth to death. The subtle changes of the shadow represent a play of language as well as of the sunlight. The extent to which Wang Fuzhi is absorbed in the play of the shadow implies the depth of his solitude. Reading this lyric side by side with his “Winter Gaze” shows that the interaction of shadows in nature parallels the relationship between Wang Fuzhi and his own shadow.

To “Washing Creek Sands”: Winter Gaze 浣溪沙 冬望
Drifting wisps of clouds stretch in the blue sky,
The solitary peak, the shadow of the peak reflects the solitary pine tree.
From the south and north of the sky wild geese bring the wind.
I gaze far at the unbounded mountains and rivers,
grieved that the sun and the moon are so indifferent.
The forest of frosty maple trees, half of them are still red.
縹渺雲絲展碧空，孤峰峰影影孤松。天南地北雁來風。
極目江山無止境，傷心日月太從容。霜楓依舊半林紅。³⁵

“The solitary peak, the shadow of the peak reflects the solitary pine tree.” Not only is Wang Fuzhi a solitary observer, but the objects of his observation are also solitary. Because Wang Fuzhi is solitary, he attends to the shadows of the peak and the pine tree; because the peak and the pine tree are solitary, they cast shadows onto each other. The backdrop of Wang Fuzhi’s solitude is the vast landscape consisting of the sun, the moon, mountains, rivers, and forests, all

³⁵ Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 107.

of which ignore his feelings and follow their own rhythms. Nature that follows its own rhythm seems to be motionless, eternal, and aloof. Because shadows have motion, they seem to own emotion. The way two shadows cling to each other reminds Wang Fuzhi of the dialogue between his self and his shadow. Just as his shadow represents his soul, the souls of natural objects reside in their shadows.

The next lyric is on the shadows of wild geese. Like the previous lyric on the shadow of a pine tree, this lyric develops with the passage of time, portraying the shadows of wild geese from their birth to their deaths.

To “The Charms of Niannu”: The Reflections of Wild Geese 念奴嬌 雁影

Passes and rivers are far away,

(I) regret that the sunlight at the border is so dim that the elegant manner (of wild geese) cannot be conveyed.

Sands are clean, and the water is clear, perfectly limpid,

Dots and dots, whistling, and distinct.

The long eyebrow in the morning mirror,

creased reflections in clear waves,

are written lightly amidst layers and layers of emerald.

A clear glimpse of them,

Don't play the fisherman's flute in the solitary boat.

Bathing ducks stick to the water and compete for flight,

Waves in disarray,

not allowing (the reflections of) thousands of coupled wild geese to be a straight line.

The wind splits the trace of clouds, revealing the sunlight at dusk,

(The shadows of wild geese) come to be close to reed catkins.

In front of the frost at the river bank in the wilderness,

Under the moon on the southern tower,

I should regret that no one recognizes it.

In the morning there is no evidence (of wild geese) left,

Leading me gaze into the north of the sky in vain.

關河迢遞，恨塞日昏黃，難傳標格。沙淨水澄清澈好，點點蕭蕭歷歷。曉鏡修眉，清波皺影，淡寫層層碧。分明瞥見，孤舟莫弄漁笛。

貼水浴鷺爭飛，凌亂波紋，未放千雙直。風烈雲痕開夕照，還與蘆花相即。野岸霜前，南樓月下，應恨無人識。曉來無據，教人空望天北。³⁶

³⁶ Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 202.

The first stanza captures the moment when a flock of wild geese flies across a river at twilight. “*Ying*” in this lyric refers to both the reflections and the shadows of wild geese. When the surface of the river is calm, the reflections of wild geese are distinct; when the river has ripples, the reflections are creased, as if characters are written on the layers of emerald water. “Don’t play the fisherman’s flute in the solitary boat” is a playful allusion to Wang Bo’s 王勃 (ca.650-76) canonical piece *Preface to Tower of Prince of Teng* 滕王閣序. “The fisherman in the boat sings in twilight, his song drifting as far as the bank of the Poyang Lake; a flock of wild geese flying in formation is startled by the chill of dusk, their voices disappearing at the shore of Hengyang” 漁舟唱晚，響窮彭蠡之濱；雁陣驚寒，聲斷衡陽之浦. The poet seems to express his fear that the fisherman’s song would startle the wild geese. While the song is not present, the poet’s fear is realized by a group of bathing ducks that make ripples to disturb the neat reflections of wild geese. The light of the setting sun shines through clouds, casting the shadows of wild geese next to reed catkins on the river bank. As the night falls, no one can recognize the shadows of the wild geese in the dark; in the next morning, no trace is left when the wild geese are gone.

The third type of shadow occurs in theatrical performance. Wang Fuzhi’s attitudes toward natural shadows/reflections and theatrical shadows present a contrast. Shadows made possible by the interplay of the sunlight and nature evoke his lyrical contemplation of solitude, but theatrical shadows inspire pathos and satire. The theater inspires Wang Fuzhi to question the illusory nature of human feelings and endeavors. His use of theater as a heuristic tool to discover the truth aptly indicates his inheritance of the late Ming sensibility and his transformation of it in the new age. Two lyrics among the fourteen are devoted to theatrical shadows. The following is the first one.

To “The Charms of Niannu”: Shadow of Shadow Play 影戲影
Laughing and weeping were both false,

but graceful panache
vaguely resembled real people.
On the half side of the painted wall the moonlight was lowly reflected;
beauties and talented men showed off.
Threads of emotion pulled them,
clear light came back to illuminate them,
and they casually said that they were heartbroken to die.
Suddenly when we saw them through,
emotion was as thin as a sheet of paper.

It must be the invisible immortal,
who stole the elixir the other year
and fell on the silver toad.³⁷
Her half side faced the human world, and she gazed from the heights,
transmitting the song “Skirts of Rainbow.”
I wanted to keep the immortal,
but could not hold back the short night,
and feared that the snuff would fall.
The “Palace of Going Astray” threw out flames³⁸.
To whom could I appeal to tug at her fragrant sleeves?
笑啼俱假，但綽約風流，依稀還似。半壁粉牆低映月，賣弄佳人才子。情絲牽引，清光回照，
漫道傷心死。猛然覷破，原來情薄一紙。
應是縹緲飛仙，當年竊藥，落在銀蟾裏。半面人間高處望，傳與霓裳歌吹。有意留仙，難禁夜
短，還怕燈花墜。迷樓吐焰，倩誰挽住香袂。³⁹

Two stanzas make a curious contrast in this lyric. The first stanza is a satire on the artificiality of emotion, whereas the second stanza expresses pathos about the ephemeral nature of emotion. Just as the “double” of Freudian theory has ambivalent functions, shadow figures evoke Wang Fuzhi’s ambivalent feelings. Wang Fuzhi intertwines the elegy for the irretrievable moment with the sarcasm of false emotion, portraying the ambivalent features of shadow play.

The first stanza describes the vivid simulacrum of shadow play and debunks its falseness. Wang Fuzhi’s sarcasm hinges upon the tool and the medium of shadow play: thread and paper. The shadows of a paper-made beauty and a talented man on the wall simulate the charms of real

³⁷ It is said that a toad lives in the moon.

³⁸ The Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty had the Palace of Going Astray built.

³⁹ *Wang Chuanshan ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 214.

lovers, but the expressions of their emotions are false, supposedly dubbed in by performers who pull the strings to control their actions. Here the string (*si*) is both a pun on emotion (*qingsi*) and a reference to the way puppet shows and shadow plays are performed. The picture of manipulated puppets in a romantic story evokes the print of a puppet show from Min Qiji's 闵齐伋 (1580-after 1661) woodblock print of *The Story of the West Chamber* 西厢记 (dated 1640)⁴⁰. In the print, the movements of two puppets acting before a painted screen are controlled by the strings held by two performers hovering over the screen, who belong to a larger pictorial representation that illustrates the play. The contrast of performers and miniaturized puppets vividly displays the boundary between the real and illusory. The subject matter of the shadow play in Wang Fuzhi's lyric must be similar to *The Story of the West Chamber*, and the satirical description of the emotion of puppets exactly matches the portrayal in the print. In addition, the formal properties of paper—sheer, thin, and transparent—add one more layer of illusion to the puppet show and inspire Wang Fuzhi's further sarcasm. A sheet of paper can be seen through in the same way that shallow emotion can be seen through. That emotion is as thin as a paper sheet is both a literal statement of the formal properties of paper and a metaphor satirizing the performance of feeling.

The tone changes in the second stanza, replacing satire with elegy. Shadow play is a play of light and darkness, and in this stanza the moonlight and candlelight inspire Wang Fuzhi's imagination of the paper figure as an inaccessible goddess and his regret at her temporary stay. The fact that the performance is illuminated by moonlight leads him to imagine that the shadow

⁴⁰ Min Qiji was a publisher and printer of illustrations. His woodblock print of *The Story of the West Chamber* consists of twenty woodcut prints of the twenty acts from *The Story of the West Chamber*. The only surviving set of Min Qiji's woodblock print of *The Story of the West Chamber* is in the Museum für ostasiatische kunst in Cologne. It is reprinted in *Ming Min Qiji huike xixiangji caitu Ming He Bi jiaoke xixiangji* 明闵齐伋绘刻西厢记彩图 明何璧校刻西厢记 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2005).

figure under the moonlight is Chang'e 嫦娥, who steals her husband's elixir, flies to the moon, and becomes the goddess of the moon.⁴¹ In some legends, it is said that Emperor Xuanzong (685-762) or Consort Yang hears the song, "Skirts of Rainbow, Coats of Feathers" 霓裳羽衣, in Chang'e's moon palace. He/she secretly memorizes the tune and transcribes the score after returning to the mortal world.⁴² Thus, the profile of the female paper figure—shadow plays often presents profiles of figures—is imaged to be Chang'e transmitting "Skirts of Rainbow, Coats of Feathers" to the emperor and his consort with only half of her face revealed remotely. The candlelight that casts the shadows of paper figures on the wall or screen also marks the passage of time. Drops of candlewax, figured as flowers, like the tick tock of a clock, signify the movements until the moment when the flame extinguishes and the play ends. The flickering flame and its impending extinction inspire Wang Fuzhi's curious association of the candle flame with the fire that destroys the "Palace of Going Astray" of the Emperor Yang of the Sui (569-618), a symbol of luxury and pleasure, where thousands of women from the harem reside. The shadow figure, when foiled by the candle flame put next to the wall or screen, seems to be a palace woman emerging from the flame, escaping the imprisonment of the "Palace of Going Astray"—the wall or the screen where shadows are cast—and then flying away like Chang'e

⁴¹ It is said in Chinese legend that Chang'e steals her husband Yi's elixir, which he receives from the Queen Mother, and flies to the moon, but only suffers from eternal loneliness there. See *Huai nan zi* 淮南子, vol. 6.

⁴² "Skirts of Rainbow, Coats of Feathers" is eighth-century Dharma music, which is part of imperial banquet music 燕/宴樂 and is influenced by inner Asian music. Bai Juyi's (772-846) poem "Song of Lasting Pain" 長恨歌 associates the tune with Consort Yang's dance. There are different sources of the creation of "Skirts of Rainbow, Coats of Feathers." Yue Shi's 樂史 (930-1007) *Yang Taizhen waizhuan* 楊太真外傳 provides two versions, both characterized by lyrical and mystical imagination. The first one quotes Liu Yuxi's 劉禹錫 (772-842) poem, saying that when Emperor Xuanzong gazed at the Nüji Mountain, he was so touched that he composed "Skirts of Rainbow and Coats of Feathers." In the process of creating the music, an official submitted a piece of India music named "Brahman Song", which Xuanzong incorporated into "Skirts of Rainbow." The second version mentions that Xuanzong heard the song in the moon palace, secretly memorized the tune, and transcribed the score. *Yang Taizhen waizhuan*, in Lu Xun 魯迅, ed., *Tang Song chuanqi ji* 唐宋傳奇集 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2002), 7. 395. *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 has a record confirming the relationship between "Brahman Song" and "Skirts of Rainbow," saying that in 754, the title of "Brahman Song" was changed into "Skirts of Rainbow and Coats of Feathers." Wang Pu 王溥, ed., *Tang huiyao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955), 33. 617.

flying to the moon. The shadow figure gets rid of the performance as the palace woman escapes the burning palace; however Wang Fuzhi ends the lyric not with the celebration of the end of illusion and artificiality, but with a lament on the transience of romance as well as the brevity of the shadow play.

The next lyric is on the shadow of a revolving scenic lantern. Revolving scenic lanterns are made of paper, and the shells of the lanterns are decorated with images. The heat of the candle inside the lantern causes shifts in air currents, which rise and push against flaps on the top and sides of the lantern. The push causes the shell of the lantern to spin like a moving shadow play. The lantern in this lyric is decorated with horseback-riding martial heroes, evoking the scene from Min Qiji's woodblock print that illustrates the act five of *The Story of the West Chamber*. In this print, the paper figures of the three main characters in the act five are hung on a revolving scenic lantern by strings. As the lantern revolves, the three paper figures seem to chase each other. The lyric describes this process of endless running and chasing.

To "The Charms of Niannu": The Shadow of a Revolving Scenic Lantern 念奴嬌 走馬燈影
The flame hasn't gone out,
Contesting, the Dilu steed rushes,
The "red hair" horse competes to be the first.
No sooner has he turned around the steep cliff he rushes down the slope,
With a halberd across his chest, he has no intention to look back.
The "sweats blood" horse and the "chasing the wind" horse,
The angry beard and stretching arms,
Always held back by time.
In the darkness the hub of the lantern turns around,
When would the ants on the grindstone stop?

Children, don't laugh at the coming and going of the lantern,
Inside as tiny as half of a needle tip,
Heroes run as quickly as wild ducks.
Ultimately toads can't jump out of the dipper,
Gradually cocks that cry before midnight urge the sky to brighten.
Remnant light at the fifth hour of the night,
A tinge of chill in the air,
(musicians) stop beating the rims of drums.

Achievements on a half piece of paper,
No one would peep at it again.

炎光未謝，競的盧飛躍，爭先赤兔。才轉危坡還注坂，橫戟無心回顧。汗血追風，怒髯奮臂，
總被流光誤。暗中轂轉，蟻磨幾時停住。
兒童莫笑來回，半針尖里，走英雄如鷺。終是蝦跳難出斗，漸有荒雞催曙。五夜光殘，一絲氣
冷，敲罷邊腔鼓。勛名半紙，無人重與偷覷。⁴³

The mixture of satire and elegy also figures in this lyric. The transition of forms is not marked by the transition of two stanzas as in the previous lyric, but is implied by the ambiguous images. The first stanza portrays that the quick movement of the shell creates the illusion of horses galloping and martial heroes fighting. The horses and martial heroes come and go as the shell of the lantern spins endlessly, but never reach their destinations. Wang Fuzhi's attention is drawn to the force behind this futile effort, the candlelight, as well as its implication of the passage of time. "(Horses and martial heroes are) always held up by the flowing light." The candlelight inside the lantern keeps the horses and martial heroes moving in a cycle, which they never escape as time elapses. Wang Fuzhi imagines them to be "ants on the grindstone," an allusion with multiple layers of meanings. In ancient Chinese accounts of astronomy, the allusion originally describes the way the sun and moon move in the universe.

The sun and the moon move to the right, but turn to the left as the sky (moves to the left). Therefore, the sun and the moon actually move to the east, but the sky pulls them to descend in the west. This is the same as ants walking on the grindstone. The grindstone turns to the left, and ants move to the right. The grindstone turns quickly and ants move slowly, therefore the ants have to turn to the left along with the grindstone.

日月右行，隨天左轉，故日月實東行，而天牽之以西沒。譬于蟻行磨石之上，磨左旋而蟻右去，磨疾而蟻遲，故不得不隨磨以左回焉。⁴⁴

The baffling fact that the sun and moon ascend in the east but descend in the west inspires the Chinese creation of the image of ants on the grindstone. Later, the image is associated with the passage of time in poetry.

⁴³ Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 217.

⁴⁴ *Jinshu* 晉書, 11.279.

Time elapses like ants on the grindstone.
年光蟻旋磨。⁴⁵

Ants on the grindstone walking opposite to the direction of the movement of the grindstone and only ending up moving alongside the grindstone parallels Sisyphus compelled to roll a boulder up a hill only to watch it roll back down, and to repeat the action forever. The futility and absurdity of the efforts of ants on the grindstone do not escape the notice of poets. Since the Song dynasty, it has served as a metaphor for human life in poetry: “Life is lived in vain, like an ant on the grindstone” 枉過一生蟻旋磨;⁴⁶ “Honor and rank, making a living like an ant revolving on the grindstone” 功名營生旋蟻磨.⁴⁷ In these poems, the image of ants on the grindstone has ambiguous meanings. Tragic heroes can be considered to be ants on the grindstone, because they struggle to move forward but never achieve their goals; but the same image can also refer to fortune hunters involved in the endless pursuit of wealth and profit.

Wang Fuzhi takes advantage of the ambiguity of this image. He may use it to lament the martial heroes’ tragedy of being deprived of free will and unable to fulfill their aspirations, to laugh at the absurdity of their aspirations, or even to question the moral motives of their actions. If we consider his involvement in the anti-Qing resistance and its eventual failure, the mixture of these complex, ambivalent feelings seem to be self-referential. They also seem to refer to many participants in the southern Ming court, whose actions could not be simply labeled as heroic, absurd, or treacherous when complex historical circumstances often deprived them of free will and made the clear-cut differentiation of good and evil impossible.

⁴⁵ Wang Yucheng 王禹偁, “The Seventh Evening of the Seventh Month” 七夕.

⁴⁶ Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105), “Yanya” 演雅.

⁴⁷ Yuan Jue 袁桷 (1266-1327), “Written for the Painting of Mount Lu” 題廬山圖.

In the second stanza, martial heroes in the lantern are described as wild ducks running in a small space as tiny as a needle tip. When people are said to “run mad after their goal like wild ducks” 趨之若鶩, the speaker’s contempt cannot be clearer. Echoing the ambiguity of the image of ants on the grindstone, here the martial heroes seem to become greedy competitors. To show further the contempt for their competition, Wang Fuzhi compares them to toads that cannot jump out of the dipper. But once again Wang Fuzhi’s feelings toward martial heroes are ambivalent. His sarcasm seems directed to himself as well as to others, as antagonistic circumstances may force noble heroes to behave like trivial ducks and toads. As the lantern performance ends at dawn, pathos replaces sarcasm. Just as toads and ants cannot escape the dipper and grindstone, the martial heroes are doomed to be imprisoned in the lantern to repeat their futile efforts. It is the inescapable fate of actors that is lamentable.

Both shadow play and revolving scenic lanterns are theatrical performances created by a sheet of paper. If “Shadow of Shadow Play” satirizes the artificiality of emotion by denouncing it as being as thin as a sheet of paper, “Shadow of Revolving Scenic Lantern” ridicules the futility of military achievements by saying that no one would look at the military achievements on a half piece of paper after the performance ends. As outlined at the beginning of this paper, life has been regarded as a play and the world as a stage since the late Ming. Wang Fuzhi’s attention to paper sheets adds a new twist to the concept of life as a play. When he says that emotion is as thin as a sheet of paper and that military achievements are on a half piece of paper, a sheet of paper—the medium of both shadow plays and revolving scenic lanterns—becomes the medium of a larger theatrical performance, that is, life itself. Emotion is elaborated in romantic stories, military achievements are recorded in historical accounts, and both rely on paper to be preserved and transmitted. Just as the performance of shadow plays and a revolving scenic lantern rely on

paper sheets, human feeling, military achievements, and human history in general are written on paper, and therefore are nothing but theatrical performances that are artificial, ephemeral, and fragile. It is this link between paper sheets and human life as a play that determines the mixture of pathos and satire in Wang Fuzhi's lyrics on shadow plays. They point to the same theme of life as a play, exploring rich layers of meaning in this metaphor. Life is a play in which actors are imprisoned on stage to perform regardless of, or against, their free will, and therefore life is the object of sarcasm. However, since life is nothing but a play and the end of the play signifies the end of life, one cannot help but long for the play. The development from the birth of shadow to its disappearance in these lyrics is Wang Fuzhi's way of expressing his lament on transient life and his understanding of the threat of death. Wang Fuzhi's ambivalence toward lovers and martial heroes in shadow plays also parallels his portrayal of his own shadow that is both comic and tragic, as well as his portrayal of delightful, solitary shadows in nature. All together they are metaphors for a life that is manipulated, ephemeral, and solitary.

Puppet and Skeleton

Paper figures in shadow plays are the same as puppets. Like shadow figures, puppets also feature prominently in Wang Fuzhi's lyrics exploring the theme of life as a play. Some of these lyrics on puppets follow the convention. The following one is an example.

“Bu suan zi”: Song on the puppet shown to accompanying friends
While he seems to have spring melancholy,
whom could he ask to speak on behalf of him?
He can't say anything about what is on his mind
though thrusting his clove-like tongue.
His shadow is cast by the light of the candle, swaying in the wind.
The dim moonlight casts a slant shadow of him.
With such cosmetic cover who could differentiate truth from false?
Beneath his skin there is no blood.

卜算子 咏傀儡示从游诸子

也似帶春愁，卻倩何人說。更無半字與關心，吐出丁香舌。紅燭影搖風，斜映朦朧月。鉛華誰辨假中真，皮下無些血。⁴⁸

Wang Fuzhi's characteristic obsession with shadow features in his portrayal of the shadow of the puppet instead of the puppet itself, but his sarcastic treatment of the puppet is similar to Wang Yangming's poem on puppets quoted earlier in the paper. The dissonance between the vivid gesture and gorgeous makeup of the puppet and its inarticulateness makes it a perfect metaphor for those who pretend to be genuine or whose feelings are manipulated.

Wang Fuzhi's four lyrics on skeletons—one form of puppets in puppet shows—are a reversal of poetic convention. He wrote these lyrics to the tune of “Spring in the Qin Garden” 沁園春 in the 1670s,⁴⁹ responding to Jin Bao's 金堡 (1614-1680) seven lyrics to the same tune inscribed for a painting of a skeleton (now no longer extant). Jin Bao wrote the seven lyrics as a response to the Yuan dynasty painter Wu Zhen's 吳鎮 (1280-1354) lyric inscribed for the same painting. The subject matter of the painting is very likely a performance by the skeleton, as is portrayed in the well-known painting, *The Illusory Performance of Skeletons* 骷髏幻戲圖, by the Southern Song painter Li Song 李嵩 (fl. 1190-1230). Li Song's painting shows two children and a young mother suckling a baby watching a marionette show. The puppet-master who operates the show and his puppet are both skeletons.⁵⁰ The lyrics of Wu Zhen and Jin Bao do not specify the skeleton in the painting as a puppet, but Wang Fangzhi's four lyrics clearly refer to the skeleton as a puppet whose life and death are beyond his control. In this sense, his four lyrics on the skeleton constitute a verbal counterpart of the painting similar to *The Illusory Performance of Skeletons*. Wang Fuzhi claims to write these lyrics to reverse the similar ideas expressed in the lyrics of Wu

⁴⁸ Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p.238.

⁴⁹ The date is according to Long Yusheng's 龍榆生 research. See Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 111.

⁵⁰ See Wilt Idema, “Skulls and Skeletons in Art and Stage,” in *Conflict and Accommodation in Early Modern East Asia: Essays in Honor of Erik Zürcher*, ed. Leonard Blussé and Harriet T. Zurndorfer (Leiden: Brill, 1993).

Zhen and Jin Bao. “Dangui (Jin Bao) ridiculed that the inscription of The Taoist of Plum Blossoms (Wu Zhen) on the painting *The Skull* was mediocre, and wrote another seven inscriptions for it. Though Dangui’s words are different from those of the Taoist, their ideas are similar. I wrote these four lyrics to reverse and correct their ideas.” 梅花道人題骷髏圖，淡歸嗤其鄙陋，為別作七首，乃詞異而所見亦不相遠，反其意作四闕正之。 Wu Zhen’s lyric is a straightforward, conventional satire of life stating that once life ends, all the endeavors, achievements, and glories become empty, a motif written about by many poets and dramatists. Jin Bao’s seven lyrics describe violence and war at the time of the dynastic transition in relation to the skeleton. They are more complex and deserve independent research, but suffice it to say here that they, like Wu Zhen’s lyric, ridicule the futility of the life of the skeleton. By contrast, Wang Fuzhi’s four lyrics are four acts, where the skeleton undergoes transformations from being a skeleton, the soul of the skeleton waiting to be reborn, the person reborn, to the skeleton again, just as an actor plays different roles. Since shadow play can refer to the vivid representation of soul or ghost, the performance of the skeleton and soul in these lyrics can also be called shadow play.⁵¹

The four lyrics are puzzling and ambiguous in phrases, but it is clear that the theme is the loss of human agency. Wang Fuzhi discusses the issues of life as a play, free will, and the force of human life in relation to Buddhism and *Zhuangzi* thought. The following is the first one.

The white sun can never be fooled.
 The blue sky is never wrong.
 There is only the skull.
 When the play on the stage ends,
 (musicians) stop beating the rims of drums.
 The smoke of the incense burner disperses,

⁵¹ For example, in *The Peony Pavilion*, when resurrected Du Liniang visits her uninformed parents, they think they are seeing her soul and comment that she is playing in a vivid shadow play. *The Peony Pavilion*, act 48.

and only the smoke cage is left.
Even if this is Heaven Beyond Thoughts,
emptiness and existence must be calculated.
Indulgence and restraint of his life have finished.
He does not predict that
eventually he will float a boat on autumn waves
to any fragrant islet.

Thinking of (the past) he can't help but be ashamed.
He once braved the spring rain and walked in puddles.
He remembers that fragrant steamed rice that is like white jade
satisfied his appetite,
and that embroidered silk
gently covered his body.
Don't think that human ignorance
can fool the perceptive sky.
Everything eventually comes down to the leaf of a parasol tree in autumn.
Please remember,
what will be revealed in the next chapter
will have different panache.

白日難欺，青天不爽，只此骷髏。到排場戲畢，盡停邊鼓；熏爐煙散，卻剩香篝。無想有天，
也須扣算，放自當年到此收。終不道，泛秋波一葉，隨處芳洲。
思量慚愧難酬，曾頂戴春霖起白漚。憶香蒸雲子，從伊飽滿；輕裁霞綺，護汝溫柔。莫倚無知，
瞞他有眼，總付梧桐一片秋。應認取，者下回分解，別有風流。⁵²

At the beginning of the lyric, Wang Fuzhi describes the end of human life in the same way that he describes the end of the performance of the revolving lantern: “When the play on the stage ends, musicians stop beating the rims of drums.” At the end of the lyric, he borrows the stock phrase at the end of every chapter of vernacular fiction, comparing the next stage of the skeleton's transformation with the next chapter of a fiction. The skeleton's life, death, and reincarnation are a performance of a book, also a performance of paper like shadow plays and revolving scenic lanterns. The beginning and the end of this lyric thus establish the theatrical framework of the four lyrics. In the first stanza, the skeleton ends his performance and enters Heaven Beyond Thoughts, a realm in Buddhist cosmology where there is neither thinking nor not-thinking. This seems to mean that all virtues and evils are obliterated when life ends. The

⁵² Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 110-1.

soul of the skeleton leaves the stage and wanders around in a boat, evoking ancient ministers and poets who leave the world in a boat and become recluses after achieving worldly accomplishments. The second stanza is a retrospection of the skeleton's previous life, implying his romantic dalliances and refined life style. As is repeated in many lyrical and dramatic works on the same subject matter, pleasure of life is impermanent, ending metaphorically in fallen leaves of beeches in the autumn, invoking the Tang emperor Xuanzong's memory of executed consort Yang Yuhuan.⁵³ Just as the lyrics of shadow plays and revolving lanterns take love and military feats to be the totality of life, here Wang Fuzhi summarizes the skeleton's previous life in love and worldly accomplishment, two aspects that will be revisited in the next three lyrics. The second lyric describes that the soul of the skeleton is thrown to the universe and waits to be reincarnated.

When you did not yet exist,
indeed there is no information of you,
To invite this scenery.
When clouds rise and the moon emerges,
Then it becomes full round.
The slopes of the mountain and branches of the river,
Are clear in the tiniest particular.
Who repairs the axe to chop down the cassia tree?
Jade sands are hard to grind.
(The moon) that has seven treasures is exquisitely carved.⁵⁴
You have been asked to
Shine the auspicious light of the sun
And freeze frost in the chill night.

It is hard to predict (who can achieve) success,
It is simply thrown to the charge of the universe.
Plum blossoms bloom all over in snow,

⁵³ This is an allusion to a line from Bai Juyi's 白居易 (772-846) "Song of Lasting Pain" 長恨歌. "On days when plums and peaches opened in the breeze of spring; and in the season of autumn rain when beeches shed their leaves" 春風桃李花開日, 秋雨梧桐葉落時. Inspired by Bai's poem, Bai Pu's 白樸 (1226-1306) drama on the love story of the emperor Xuanzong and the Consort Yang is titled *Rain on the Tong Tree* 梧桐雨.

⁵⁴ In the Tang dynasty miscellaneous collection, *Youyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎, the moon is said to be made of seven treasures. Duan Chengshi 段成式, *Youyang zazu*, vol. 1, p. 13.

who let you have the reserved character?
 Willows sway in the wind,
 It is not because you are frivolous.
 Hundreds of willow branches are snapped, but the tree still looks new,
 Every twig is in order,
 It will not hurt to have grasses blurred in the mist.
 Please take care of yourself,
 Let the great potter tailor
 to shorten the legs of the crane and lengthen those of the duck.
 當汝無時，原無消息，逗此風光。到雲生月吐，旋相圓滿；山支水派，不爽針芒。桂斧誰修，
 玉砂難碾，琢就玲瓏七寶裝。曾倩汝，為日輪炫紫，寒夜凝霜。
 成功底事難量，仍擲與乾坤自主張。盡雪里梅開，憑誰蘊藉；風中柳擺，非汝輕狂。百折如新，
 一絲不亂，煙草迷離總不妨。珍重好，教大鈞裁剪，鶴短鳬長。⁵⁵

The first stanza focuses on the moon because of the close connection between the human soul and the moon in ancient Chinese thought. According to Yu Ying-shih's research, before the dualistic conception of *hun* 魂 and *po* 魄 began to refer to the human soul in the sixth century B.C., *po* alone was used to denote it. The character *po* means "white," "bright," or "bright light," and these meanings derive originally from the growing light of the new moon. "The ancient Chinese took the changing phases of the moon as periodic birth and death of its *po*, its "white light" or soul. By analogy, they eventually came to associate, by the early sixth century B.C. if not earlier, the life or death of a man with the presence or absence of his *po*.⁵⁶ Here Wang Fuzhi seems to suggest the intangible journey of the human soul by portraying the birth of the full moon. As the moon gradually emerges from clouds and becomes full, the lunar landscape is displayed. Wang Fuzhi's description of the moon follows the Chinese imagination of the lunar landscape. The moon is an exquisite architecture made of seven treasures, reflecting the light of the sun, and it is dominated by the scene of the legendary figure Wu Gang chopping a cassia tree and the hare persistently pounding herbs into an elixir in the mortar. In the second stanza, the

⁵⁵ Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 114.

⁵⁶ Yu Ying-shih, "'O Soul, Come Back!' A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 47, no.2, 1987, p. 370.

human soul wanders the universe, as if witnessing the willful power of the universe on everything. Then the focus of the lyric temporarily shifts from the soul to the universe. Wang Fuzhi's voice is mixed with the soul's voice to address plum blossoms and willows, denying that they voluntarily own the characters—reserved elegance of plum blossoms and frivolity of willows—that have been conventionally attributed to them in poetry. The end of the lyric is puzzling when it asks the universe to shorten the legs of the crane and lengthen those of the duck. In the *Zhuangzi* chapter “Webbed Toes” 駢拇, the long legs of the crane and short legs of the duck are used to demonstrate that every creature has its own unalterable nature.⁵⁷ Wang Fuzhi's rewriting of *Zhuangzi* seems to suggest that the creator of the universe is so irrational that he may sometimes rearrange its order by destroying the nature of everything.

The third lyric continues with the theme of loss of agency and further dissolves the difference between victory and defeat, good and evil.

Eventually the same,
Morning wind and the remnant moon,
It is right time to be sober.
Look at Great Whiteness (Venus) and divine by astrology,
The color of jade is displayed.
The Yellow Bell pitch pipe⁵⁸ accords with the rules of music,
Rings like the sound of metal.
The banquet of the ceremony of abdication ends,
The battle against the tyrant finishes,
His (value) does not increase, nor does yours decrease.
What is lovely is that
When great turtles are burned⁵⁹
their withered bodies are still numinous.

⁵⁷ Chapter 8, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 317.

⁵⁸ The twelve tones that define the Chinese gamut correspond to the twelve months of the year, and these tones are defined by a set of twelve pitch pipes of specified lengths. These pitch pipes are divided into six yang *lü* 律 and six yin *lü* 呂. The Yellow Bell pitch pipe is the first one of the twelve, and corresponds to the eleventh month. It makes the note *gong* 宮, the sovereign of the notes.

⁵⁹ The great turtle is a metaphor for talent men. That the great turtle is burned suggests that talented men are destroyed.

The petals of fallen flowers in the west garden⁶⁰,
 Beautify the east wind and make the setting sunlight more charming.
 No matter how much blood is shed, and (how sad Xiang Yu laments for) his concubine Yuji,
 (He dies) not because of the failure of the battle.⁶¹
 Grieved by the failure in the exam,⁶²
 The literary fame is not harmed.
 The huge bell of ten thousands of tons,⁶³
 A shred of silk ribbon left,
 Only a few bones in the ice and frost.
 Who would be free
 to lament the cries of the cranes in Huating,⁶⁴
 and the whisper of rain on the Shu road?⁶⁵
 畢竟還他，曉風殘月，正好惺惺。看太白占星，顯開玉色；黃鐘應律，敲作金聲。揖讓筵終，
 征誅局罷，渠不增加汝不輕。堪愛處，為元龜受灼，枯槁皆靈。
 西園片片落英，也妝點東風媚晚晴。任血灑虞兮，原非戰罪；腸回康了，不礙文名。萬石洪鐘，
 一絲殘紐，止此冰霜骨幾莖。夫誰暇，怨華亭鶴唳，蜀道淋鈴。⁶⁶

At the beginning of the lyric, “morning wind and the remnant moon,” a phrase borrowed from Liu Yong’s 柳永 (ca.987-ca.1053) famous lyric, suggests the passage of time and heralds the next phase of the soul’s transformation.⁶⁷ The reincarnated soul enters the new cycle of life that is characterized by war and violence. The appearance of Great Whiteness (Venus) predicts war in ancient Chinese astrology. The sound of metal signifies the end of a battle, as opposed to the sound of the drum that signifies the beginning of a battle. Together, Great Whiteness and the

⁶⁰ West garden is a synonym for Shanglin Park 上林苑 in the Han Dynasty, a place for hunting and social gathering.

⁶¹ This is a quote from “Xiang Yu’s Biography” in Sima Qian’s *Records of the Grand Historian*.

⁶² *Ankang* 安康 and *Anle* 安樂 are interchangeable and mean ‘welfare.’ Since *le* 樂 is a homophone for drop, fail *luo* 落, *kangliao* 康了 is used as a euphemism for *luoliao* 落了, meaning to fail an exam.

⁶³ The huge bell signifies wealth.

⁶⁴ Lu Ji 陸機 (261-303) lamented that he would not be able to hear the sound of cranes in Huating before he was executed.

⁶⁵ In Bai Juyi’s “Song of Lasting Regret” 長恨歌, the Emperor Xuanzong is said to recall the deceased consort Yang and feel heart broken when he heard the bell ringing in the rain.

⁶⁶ *Wang Chuanshan ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 117.

⁶⁷ In Hong Sheng’s 洪昇 (1645-1705) play, *Palace of Lasting Life* 長生殿 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1958), the same phrase is used in the scene when the consort Yang’s soul descends to meet her corpse, 37. 165.

sound of metal imply war, but when the jade color (of Great Whiteness) and the sound of metal are put together, it is a metaphor for virtue and integrity. It seems that Wang Fuzhi implies people of virtue and integrity are destroyed by war. The end of the first stanza seems to support this reading. That the withered bones of great turtles are still numinous may suggest that talented men are memorialized after their death. But Wang Fuzhi neither deplores the demise of virtue and talent nor celebrates the triumph of justice. The juxtaposition of the banquet of the ceremony of abdication and the battle against the tyrant is followed by his comment that neither the value/fame of the sage king increases nor the value/fame of the tyrant decreases simply because justice is done. The idea of reincarnation that appears in all the four lyrics apparently comes from Buddhism, but the law of retribution—the good are rewarded and the evil are punished in the afterlife—is absent here. This dissolution of the necessity of moral judgment can be traced to Guo Xiang’s summary of the gist of the *Zhuangzi* chapter “The Sorting Which Evens Things Out” 齊物論: “Though there is difference between right and wrong, both parts are equal” 是非雖異而彼我均也.⁶⁸ The just war does not confirm moral principles, but only leaves the skeletons of talented men (the withered bones of turtles) behind. In addition, Wang Fuzhi’s tone when talking about burned turtles is ambiguous, if not sarcastic or comical. Generally speaking, the lyrical phrase “what is lovely” 堪愛處 often heralds beautiful women or lovely scenery. Saying that the residue of the war can be used in divination and therefore is lovely is a displacement of the word “lovely,” if not a misuse of it. It creates a linguistic dissonance comparable to the acoustic/visual dissonance made by the juxtaposition of a delightful song and a violent scene. This deliberate displacement or misuse of the word seems to ridicule the war as a staged performance, the

⁶⁸ *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 43.

aftermath of which is not to confirm the difference between right and wrong but to offer a product for trivial use.

The second stanza continues the theme of the first stanza by obliterating the meanings of all military and civil endeavors, epitomized in war and examinations respectively, on the grounds that everyone ends up being a skeleton. The idea of the irrational creator that appears earlier in the second lyric reappears here. Xiang Yu 項羽 (232B.C.-202B.C.) died not because he lost the battle to his adversary, but because Heaven, another name for the great potter/creator of the universe, intended to destroy him. Failing the exam does not change one's literary talent that is endowed by Heaven. Wealth and high rank that may follow from one's success in the exam do not make a difference in one's destiny to eventually become a skeleton. The themes of the irrational creator and the dissolution of differentiation echo the second lyric and the first stanza of the third lyric and finally lead to the idea of the irrelevance of human feelings. The allusions to Lu Ji's 陸機 (261-303) lament before he was executed that he would not be able to hear the sound of cranes in his hometown again and the Tang emperor Xuanzong's sad memory of his executed imperial concubine while in exile—two stories of the tragic end of political ambition and romantic passion—end the lyric with the conclusion that there is no need to lament for any loss, political or romantic. When the Zhuangzi principle of evening things out is applied to the issue of death, death and life can be regarded as equal, just as two opposite sides are equal. Given Wang Fuzhi's participation in anti-Manchu battles and the historical context of the consolidation of the Qing rule, his descriptions of the irrational creator, the wars that do not confirm justice, the dissolution of the difference between victory and defeat, and the denial of the meanings of sadness and remorse all reflect his interpretations of the mechanism of dynastic change and the moral meanings of the political efforts of his and others in preserving the Ming

dynasty. His suspicion of and sarcasm about moral judgment and human feelings, theoretically supported by *Zhuangzi* and Buddhism, respond to the historical circumstances he must reconcile with and are in accord with many other thinkers of his age.⁶⁹

In the fourth lyric, the reincarnated person becomes a skeleton again after experiencing all the futile endeavors of life.

Let me ask you Zhuangzi
Your random words lament me in vain,
I laugh at you, how ignorant you are!
Since I have been made to be like this
How can I escape (death)?
A statement like yours,
What's the use of it?
It seems fortunate that plants have not withered,
But before that they already begin drifting around,
Eventually fish die at the bank of the river.
(They) already disappoint
peach blossoms on the spring river, willows on the autumn bank.

I want to leave (my life) behind, but to whom?
Indeed I avoid my shadow,
The silver lamp is blown out for nothing.
Even though the butterfly dream is light on the pillow,
Still attached by powdered wings.
Silk worms are deep in three sleeps,
But still cocoons are unraveled.
Once gone, I can't be detained,
If I'm detained, indeed I can't decline it,
The pattern grows in a crevice, playing with the horn of the rhinoceros in the moon.⁷⁰
Only for a moment,
(I) can (see) the trace of frost on the wood bridge,
and (hear) cocks crying before dawn at the thatched inn.⁷¹

為問蒙莊，卮言枉吊，笑爾何知！既使我其然，焉能免此？如君之說，抑又奚為！幸未凋零，
先為飄蕩，究竟魚還死水湄。早辜負，卻桃花春水，楊柳秋堤。

⁶⁹ For example, Jia Fuxi's drum ballads express the same idea.

⁷⁰ In Taoist records it is said that the rhinoceros gazes at the crescent so intently that the shape of the crescent grows in its horn. The story indicates that the rhinoceros achieves consciousness after communicating with the moon.

⁷¹ The last two lines allude to the couplet from Wen Tingyun's 溫庭筠 (ca.801?-66) poem "Travel in the Morning" 早行. "The sound of a cock, moonlight on the thatched inn; the trace of a traveler, frost on the wood bridge" 雞聲茅店月，人跡板橋霜。

欲拋拋付伊誰，真避影、銀燈只浪吹。便一枕蝶輕，還黏粉翅；三眠蠶穩，仍惹縑絲。去則難留，留原難卻，一線紋生玩月犀。唯片晌，耐板橋霜跡，茅店荒雞。⁷²

In the first stanza, Wang Fuzhi rewrites the dialogue between the skeleton and Zhuangzi in the *Zhuangzi* chapter “The Utmost Pleasure” 至樂, where the skeleton boasts of his freedom and pleasure after hearing Zhungzi’s condolences.⁷³ The skeleton in this lyric is as satisfied with his death as the skeleton in *Zhuangzi*, but unlike the latter who gives a speech on the superiority of death, the skeleton here knows the inevitable circle of birth and death and predicts the prospect of rebirth.

In the second stanza, the skeleton further challenges Zhuangzi and Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), two figures in Chinese history celebrating the transcendence of life and death through writings of dreams. At the end of the chapter “The Sorting Which Evens Things Out” is a famous story of Zhuangzi dreaming of becoming a butterfly.

Once Zhuang Zhou dreamed he was a butterfly. A butterfly fluttering happily around—was he revealing what he himself meant to be? He knew nothing of Zhou. All at once awakening, there suddenly he was—Zhou. But he didn’t know if he was Zhou having dreamed he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he was Zhou. Between Zhou and the butterfly there must surely be some distinction. This is known as the transformation of things.⁷⁴

This dream invites different interpretations. The standard modern interpretation focuses on “the transformation of things,” arguing for the obliteration of the distinction between Zhuangzi and the butterfly.⁷⁵ But the traditional interpretation since Guo Xiang specifically links the distinction between Zhuangzi and the butterfly with the distinction between life and death. Guo Xiang reads into Zhuangzi’s dream of being a butterfly a metaphor for death, and his awakening from the dream as his coming back to life. The fact that Zhuangzi forgets himself as Zhuangzi in the

⁷² Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 120.

⁷³ *Zhuangzi*, Chapter 18.

⁷⁴ Angus Grahams’ translation, in *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, p. 103.

⁷⁵ Chen Guying, *Zhuangzi jinzhu jinyi*, p. 92.

butterfly dream suggests that when one is dead he enjoys death so much that he forgets life, and vice versa; therefore it is unnecessary to fear death when one is alive.⁷⁶ Wang Fuzhi apparently alludes to the butterfly dream for its implication of death, but does not take death as a delightful transcendence of life. He writes that the lightness of dream/death is burdened by the wings of the butterfly. The immaterial state of dream/death is not free of the materiality of life, suggesting that death shares the same attribute as life and does not transcend the restraints of life. Wang Fuzhi's next allusion is to a couplet from Su Shi's poem: "What does the human world have? A dream in spring; in my life I will age in a silkworm's three sleeps" 人間何有春一夢, 此身將老蠶三眠.⁷⁷ Su Shi wrote the poem when he returned to the court after a long exile, expressing his desire to withdraw from politics. It is said in Chinese agricultural books that silkworms molt three times before spinning their cocoons, and that when they molt they are as static as if in sleep. After they spin their cocoons, they will emerge as moths from cocoons, but in order to keep the cocoons intact, silkworms are not allowed to survive and the cocoons are boiled. In this couplet Su Shi compares himself to a sleeping silkworm and his life to the dream of a silkworm, implying that he is willing to live and die in quietude like a dreaming silkworm (though the theme of the poem is not death and the implication is not explored). Wang Fuzhi rewrites Su Shi's couplet, saying that while silkworms feel cozy in three sleeps before death their cocoons will still be unraveled, suggesting that death is not the end. As in the butterfly dream, the

⁷⁶ Guo Xiang's interpretation, in *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 112-3.

⁷⁷ This poem has a long title, "Wang Shen (style name Jinqing [1036-ca1093]) painted *Layered Hills on the Misty River*. I wrote a poem of fourteen couples for it. Jinqing wrote a companion piece. Its phrases are especially wonderful, so I wrote one more poem to rhyme with his. My poem not only describes the beauty of his painting and poem, but also explains the reason for his retirement and his hardships. My poem ends with admonishing him not to forget being in the state Ju, (allusion to the exile of Lord Huan of the state Qi in the state Ju), showing my friendship" 王晋卿作烟江叠嶂图, 仆赋诗十四韵, 晋卿和之, 语特奇丽, 因复次韵, 不独纪其诗画之美, 亦为道其出处契阔之故, 而终之以不忘在莒之戒, 亦朋友忠爱之义也。

immaterial state of death is connected with the material state of life in the silkworm dream. While the dream writings of Zhuangzi and Su Shi celebrate death as transcendence and suggest that life and death are exclusive states, the influence of Buddhism makes Wang Fuzhi take life and death as two stages of one cycle. Both life and death are temporary journeys out of the control of human beings: “Once gone, I can’t be detained; if I’m detained, indeed I can’t decline it.” The lyric ends with the skeleton, lingering at the inn where he has temporarily lodged and ready to start his journey like a traveler, suggesting the next stage of this cycle of life and death. All together Wang Fuzhi’s four lyrics on the skeleton take life and death to be acts of a staged performance, dissolving seriousness, denying the necessity of making moral judgments, and blurring the boundary between right and wrong. The idea that life is a play gives the four lyrics a theatrical framework and brings out the issues of human agency, free will, and fate that are also central concerns of Buddhism and *Zhuangzi*. The Buddhist idea that life is an eternal reincarnation resonates with the idea of life as a play, dissolving the necessity of making moral judgments in the current life. But Wang Fuzhi mixes Buddhism with *Zhuangzi* thought, thus making the differentiation of good and evil unnecessary even in the afterlife. The dominant thoughts in the four lyrics, that life is uncontrollable and that there is no difference between right and wrong, are legacies of *Zhuangzi*. Wang Fuzhi appropriates *Zhuangzi* thought to develop the theme of the denial of moral judgment that was shared by many literati of his time.

Dense allusions and ambiguous phrases of the four lyrics defy easy interpretation, but Wang Fuzhi also declares the same thought more straightforwardly in the two lyrics around 1674⁷⁸ explaining the gist of *Zhuangzi*. The first of the two is quoted here.

To “Connected Jade Circles”: Explaining the Gist of Zhuangzi to reply the interviewer
Where are cause and conditions of life?
We are changed to have all kinds of shapes

⁷⁸ See the editor’s note in *Wang Chuanshan ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 129.

by the ruthless creator.
 Even though we try all our effort, we can't argue with him,
 Not to mention to have leisure mind
 To care about them (cause and conditions of life).
 After all calculations,
 Let's just give our life to the wind that blows pipes.⁷⁹
 When the (Great Channel) border was demarcated,
 The battle between the Chu and Han ended,⁸⁰
 Who made the border?

A wisp of misty cloud in the broad sky,
 Let the elegant wings of butterfly flutter
 clearly beyond flowers.
 I laugh that ten thousands of years become emptiness in a moment,
 Randomly controlling
 The little dove, a huge fish, and a big bird.⁸¹
 Turn my head back to the southland,
 I see that bright colored spring is like a sea.
 In the world
 I will keep on wandering easily everywhere,
 regardless of the change of the east ocean into mulberry fields.⁸²

玉連環 述蒙莊大旨答問者

生緣何在？被無情造化，推移萬態。縱盡力難與分疏，更有何閒心，為之倏保。百計思量，且交付天風吹籟。到鴻溝割后，楚漢局終，誰為疆界？

長空一絲煙靄，任翩翩蜚翅，泠泠花外。笑萬歲頃刻成虛，將鳩鶯鯢鵬，隨機支配。回首江南，看爛漫春光如海。向人間，到處逍遙，滄桑不改。⁸³

The first stanza begins with the ruthless creator's manipulation of everyone's life, the theme previously addressed in the four lyrics. Then Wang Fuzhi makes an allusion to the concept of the piping of heaven from the *Zhuangzi* chapter "The Sorting Which Evens Things Out." "Blowing

⁷⁹ This is an allusion to the *Zhuangzi* chapter "The Sorting Which Evens Things Out." There are three types of piping: the piping of men, the piping of earth, and the piping of heaven. The piping of men refers to the sound of flutes and whistles. The piping of earth refers to the sound of hollows on the earth blown by the wind. The piping of heaven refers to the fact that when the wind blows on all things on the earth, all take what they want for themselves. The piping of heaven means that no one controls all things on the earth.

⁸⁰ This refers to the battle between Xiang Yu and Liu Bang.

⁸¹ This is an allusion to the *Zhuangzi* chapter "Free and Easy Wandering" 逍遙遊. A huge fish named *Kun* changes to a big bird named *Peng* and flies to the south. When the little dove sees *Peng* journeying to the south, the dove, satisfied with his own limited ability to journey only short distances, laughs at *Peng*'s long journey.

⁸² The east ocean becoming mulberry fields is a metaphor for great changes.

⁸³ Wang Chuanshan *ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 128.

on the ten thousand things in a different way, so that each can be itself—all take what they want for themselves, but who does the sounding?” 夫吹萬不同, 而使其自己也, 咸其自取, 怒者其誰邪。⁸⁴

The piping of heaven refers to the fact that everything makes sound by itself. Guo Xiang explains heaven 天 to be the collective name of all things 萬物之總名 and the way of heaven to be that everything is in charge of itself. In this sense, the concept of the piping of heaven in fact challenges the existence of the ruthless creator. It also implies that heaven is not responsible for human actions. The concept of the piping of heaven is followed by the allusions to Xiang Yu's and Liu Bang's 劉邦 (256 B.C.-195 B.C.) respective control of half of China after the demise of the Qin Dynasty (221 B.C.-206 B.C.) and the historical battle between them that heralded the consolidation of the new unified Han Dynasty. Wang Fuzhi's allusions to the demise of the Qin and the battle between Liu and Xiang obliquely refer to the fall of the Ming and the battle between the newly established Qing and Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612-1678) that lasted from 1674 to 1678, the same period when the lyric was written.⁸⁵ Echoing the piping of heaven, Wang Fuzhi's rhetorical question of who makes the border of the states actually attributes the change of the dynasty to chance and therefore implies it is not necessary to make moral judgments about political success or failure. The second stanza makes an allusion to “Wandering Easily” 逍遙遊, the first chapter of *Zhuangzi*. The chapter begins with the long journey of a huge bird and a little dove's ridicule of the endeavor of the bird, exploring the distinction between the great and the small, both in the physical and spiritual senses. The traditional comments on the chapter since Guo Xiang emphasize the need to dissolve the distinction between the great and the small and to celebrate the state of transcending the distinction in the pithy term “wandering easily.” “Though

⁸⁴ *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 50, Burton Watson's translation.

⁸⁵ See the editor's note in *Wang Chuanshan ci biannian jianzhu*, p. 129.

there is difference between the great and the small, when they are put in places where they can enjoy themselves, they are free to have their natures and their actions correspond to their abilities. They both behave in the limit of their natures and both wander easily. How can we say that one is superior to the other?" 夫小大雖殊, 而放於自得之場, 則物任其性, 事稱其能, 各當其分, 逍遙一也, 豈容勝負於其間哉.⁸⁶ Guo Xiang's explication of the gist of the chapter "Wandering Easily" is along the same lines as the chapter "The Sorting Which Evens Things Out," dissolving the necessity of judging different things. While Wang Fuzhi does not state relativism, he suspends the moral judgment on the great and the small like Guo Xiang. Here the huge bird and little dove, which can be read as metaphors for two opposite, adversarial sides, Xiang Yu vs. Liu Bang, or the Qing government vs. Wu Sangui, are simply products of the contingencies of fate. Great or small, they both realize their natures. Wang Fuzhi visualizes the state of "wandering easily" in the image of a butterfly from the chapter "The Sorting Which Evens Things Out." "Wandering easily" is a playful way of engaging the world where the logical, moral cause is absent and resonates with the idea of life as a play. No doubt the easily wandering butterfly is Wang Fuzhi's self-image.

Are these lyrics of life masquerading as a playful performance to be taken at face value by readers or do they prompt readers to seek the truth behind the performance? Wang Fuzhi's preface to his *Explanation of Zhuangzi* 莊子通 written in 1679 answers this question. "I cannot express what is on my mind and I live in a world that is irrelevant to my life. I have disobeyed my mind and immersed myself in the world for five years. The way I have engaged the world is close to Zhuangzi's way. How can I not feel great shame? But I'm not a disciple of Zhuangzi. What I disagree with is 'walking two roads.' I cannot help but live with Zhuangzi's way, and

⁸⁶ Guo Xiang's explication of the chapter "Wandering Easily," in *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 1.

therefore I explain *Zhuangzi* so that I do not go against my mind and principle. ... As long as my mind seeks virtue, what is wrong with explaining *Zhuangzi*? ” 念予以不能言之心，行乎不相涉之世，浮沉其側者五年，弗獲已，所以應之者，薄似莊生之術，得無大疚媿？然而予固非莊生之徒也。有所不可，“兩行”，不容不出乎此，因而通之，可以與心理不背；... 心苟為求仁之心，又奚不可。⁸⁷ The five years in the preface refers to the period from 1674 to 1678 when Wu Sangui and the Qing government were in a war, the same time when Wang Fuzhi wrote the four lyrics on the skeleton and the above lyric on *Zhuangzi*. The phrase “walking two roads” is from the chapter “The Sorting Which Evens Things Out,” summarizing the principle of relativism. “The sage harmonizes with both right and wrong and rests in Heaven the Equalizer. This is called walking two roads.” 聖人和之以是非而休乎天鈞，是之謂兩行。⁸⁸ It was a shame for Wang Fuzhi to “walk two roads,” but he had no choice but to live in the irrelevant world with the principle of “walking two roads.” The tension between his mind that pursued virtue and his way of engaging the world that denied the difference between right and wrong mirrors the ambiguity in his lyrics on the skeleton and the lyric explicating the gist of *Zhuangzi* discussed above. “Walking two roads” is the prerequisite for getting rid of the burden of moral judgment to achieve “easily wandering,” but underneath Wang Fuzhi’s tongue-in-cheek celebration of this principle lays his anxiety about the loss of moral judgment that further leads readers to question this principle.

Catching Shadows: Wang Fuzhi’s Commentary on Poetry

Wang Fuzhi’s fascination with the performance of shadow is equally displayed in his poetry commentary. The fifth item in his “Interpretations of Poetry” 詩譯 makes “shadow” a critical term.

⁸⁷ *Chuanshan quanshu* 船山全書 (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1993), 13, p. 493.

⁸⁸ *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 70, Burton Watson’s translation.

A “Ballad of Youth” by the Tang poet (Wang Changling 王昌齡 [ca.698-756]) goes:
On white horse with gilded saddle, he’s gone off with Emperor Wu,
Banners and flag in the tens of thousands, they hunt at Changyang.
High in the building his youthful wife sits playing her zither,
She sees the dust flying far away, entering Jianzhang.

The poetic speaker takes pride and satisfaction in imagining the feelings of his youthful wife as she gazes into the distance. This shows the poet’s mastery in catching the shadow. The subtlety of the following [stanza from the *Book of Songs*] lies in exactly the same thing:

The days of spring are lengthening,
The grass and the trees flourish,
The orioles are warbling,
Women pick Artemisia in crowds.
With captive warbands to be tried,
We make our way homeward.
Glorious is Lord Nanzhong—
The Xianyun tribes are quelled.

The exegetes of the Classics could not fully understand these lines, claiming that the wives saw the returning army as they were picking Artemisia: this makes the import and interest of the lines dreary. With pennons and banners flying, with halberds and pikes raised, with the din of horses and chariots, and with the victory music being played everywhere, how is it that the orioles don’t fly up and away, and much less how could one still hear their warbling? When the grand army is on the march—and let us grant that they were not causing trouble—why would these women picking Artemisia boldly show their faces right next to the columns? The troops are on their way home, and they imagine that their wives will be picking Artemisia and will hear the victory songs of the returning army; thus the lengthening daylight, the flourishing of the grasses, and the harmony of the birds singing all add to their delight. The troops also imagine that the achievements of Lord Nanzhong will resound in the women’s chambers. From afar they imagine how it will be, with delight in good fortune in the houses. And we can understand the satisfaction of the troops on the march. Then, using all this to praise Lord Nanzhong is to catch a shadow in a shadow and treat in the finest detail the limits of the human affections.⁸⁹

昔人少年行云：“白馬金鞍從武皇，旌旗十萬獵長楊。樓頭少婦鳴箏坐，遙見飛塵入建章。”想知少婦遙望之情，以自矜得意，此善於取影者也。“春日遲遲，卉木萋萋；倉庚喈喈，采繁祁祁。執訊獲丑，薄言還歸。赫赫南仲，玁狁于夷。”其妙正在此。訓詁家不能領悟，謂婦方采繁而見歸師，旨趣索然矣。建旌旗，舉矛戟，車馬喧闐，凱樂競奏之下，倉庚何能不驚飛，而尚聞其喈喈？六師在道，雖曰勿擾，采繁之婦亦何事暴面于三軍之側邪？征人歸矣，度其婦方采繁，而聞歸師之凱旋。故遲遲之日，萋萋之草，鳥鳴之和，皆為助喜。而南仲之功，震于閭閻，室家之欣幸，遙想其然，而征人之意得可知矣。乃以此而稱南仲，又影中取影，曲盡人情之極至者也。

⁸⁹ Translation is from Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, pp. 487-8, with modifications.

In this item Wang Fuzhi reads Wang Changling's poem "Ballad of Youth" 少年行 and "Setting Out the Carriage" 出車 from the *Book of Songs* from an unexpected perspective. The first two lines of "Ballad of Youth" describe a young man joining the Han imperial army and escorting Emperor Wu to hunt. The next two lines shift from the young man to his wife, portraying her playing the zither high in the building and seeing the dust far away stirred by the hunting army. Wang Fuzhi gives up this literal reading. Rather he reads the poem solely from the perspective of the young man, and thus the third and fourth lines become his imagination of his wife seeing him hunting. In the second item of "Interpretations of Poetry," Wang Fuzhi writes that poetry is valuable because readers receive different inspirations from reading the same poem regardless of the poet's intention. "The writer has one thought, but readers learn different things from the writer based on their own feelings" 作者用一致之思, 讀者各以其情而自得.⁹⁰ Wang Fuzhi's reading of "Ballad of Youth" is an exemplification of this principle. The lyrical and hermeneutical potential meanings of the term *ying* prompt him to read the poem in this unique way. *Ying* can mean multiple things in classical Chinese: shadow, reflection, portrait, and others. Catching shadow is an imperfect translation of Wang Fuzhi's term catching *ying*. He takes advantage of the fluidity of this term, saying that the description of the young man's imagination of his wife seeing the dust shows the poet's mastery in catching the *ying* of the young man's pride and satisfaction. What he means by *ying* here can be more accurately explained as a reflection of mentality in modern terminology. The scene of the wife playing the zither and seeing the dust flying far away is a reflection of what is on the young man's mind and an externalization of his mental picture. The poet's mastery in catching the shadow is to externalize and objectify his mental picture.

⁹⁰ The second item in "Interpretations of Poetry," *Jiangzhai shihua* 薑齋詩話 (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1961), p. 139-40.

Wang Fuzhi's reading of the second poem from the *Book of Songs* follows the same logic. The literal reading of the exegetes is this: the first four lines portray a spring day, with plants flourishing, birds warbling, and women picking herbs; the next two lines shift to describe the victorious army returning from battle, and the last two lines praise the glory of Lord Nanzhong, the leader of the army. Wang Fuzhi reads the poem differently from the perspective of a soldier in the army. Thus, the first four lines are the soldier's imagination of birds warbling and women picking herbs on a spring day, implying his pride in achieving an accomplishment; and the last two lines point out that the soldier's pride implies people's admiration of Lord Nanzhong. Because the portrayal of the spring day reflects the mental picture of the soldier, it is what Wang Fuzhi means by catching *ying*. Because the praise of Lord Nanzhong at the end further moves from the soldier's mental picture to his imagination of people's admiration of Lord Nanzhong, Wang Fuzhi calls these double-layered reflections/imaginations catching a *ying* in a *ying*.

The boundary between reality and mental picture collapses in Wang Fuzhi's readings of these poems, and the conflation of reality and mental picture resonates with his understanding of scene 景 and feeling 情 in poetry. He believes that scene and feeling are not separated but rather mixed in two ways—feeling in scene 景中情 and scene in feeling 情中景—and that the latter is superior to the former.⁹¹ What he means by scene in feeling echoes the term “catching shadow,” meaning that unseen feelings are perceivable in mental pictures and mental pictures find referential content in real scenes. Wang Fuzhi gives priority to feeling in poetry; he applauds the poet's mastery of “catching shadow” because in this way the poet treats “in the finest details the limits of human affections.” In this sense, “catching shadow” can also be catching feeling, as shadow is a perfect metaphor for elusive, intangible feelings.

⁹¹ *Jiangzhai Shihua*, p. 150.

Wang Fuzhi states that his lyrics on the performance of shadows are playful works. Is his poetry commentary that uses the term shadow also playful? In what way do his lyrics on shadows and his critical term, “catching shadow,” illuminate each other? His reading of the poem from the *Book of Songs* is in opposition to the exegetes, whose reading of the Classics is no doubt serious and serves to promote orthodox Confucianism. His reading shows sensitivity to visual play, the objectification of invisible feeling in the visible world. His interpretation can be said to be playful in the sense that it allows readers to ignore the heavy burden of Confucian exegeses and be inventive. His critical term “catching shadow” partially explains the reason he wrote lyrics on shadows. Just as “catching shadow” externalizes unseen feelings, his lyrics on shadows bring out his otherwise unseen self as well as the invisible soul of nature and theatrical figures. To read his lyrics on shadows and his critical term “catching shadow” side by side also shows the influence of shadow play on his poetry commentary. Shadow forms when light is blocked, but it often leads to illumination. The uncanny shadow figures inspire sarcasm, lamentation, and enlightenment in his lyrics. The fact that complex feelings converge in shadow figures in his lyrics resonates with shadow as a metaphor for subtle, intangible feelings in his poetry commentary.

Just as Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows are inspired by theatrical performance, his critical term “catching shadow” also has theatrical implications. To understand this, one needs to read “catching shadow” side by side with its parallel “wandering soul” in Jin Shengtan’s 金聖歎 (1608-1661) commentary on *The Story of the West Chamber* (Act. 2, Scene 1).

Zhuoshan told me, “When a beauty looks at her own reflection in a mirror, though she thinks she is looking at herself, in fact she is looking at him (she is imagining him looking at her). After careful thought, I believe that only Qiannü whose soul goes wandering has ever looked at herself in the last a thousand years. Another day I read a couplet from Du Fu’s collection, ‘It is pitiable that my little children far away /cannot understand (their mother’s) longing for

Chang'an.' Du Fu places his own mind in the mind of his kids. It is indeed one's own longing for himself. Also, another day I read a couplet from Wang Wei's collection, 'I know that at the border of the distant grove, no one can see the top of the eaves here.' Wang Wei places his own point of view in the distant grove. It is indeed one's own gazing at himself. Therefore, two masters both use the method that 'Qiannü's body leaves her soul' to write poetry." When I read *West Chamber* today, I cannot help but smile. I wrote a letter to Zhuoshan, "You told me that Wang and Du both use the method that 'Qiannü's body leaves her soul' to write poetry. In fact their method is only one word, that is, distance."

斫山云：“美人于鏡中照影，雖云看自，實是看他。細思千載以來，只有離魂倩女一人，曾看自也。他日讀杜子美詩有句云：‘遙憐小兒女，未解憶長安。’卻將自己腸肚移置兒女分中，此真是自憶自。又他日讀王摩詰詩有句云：‘遙知遠林際，不見此簷端。’亦將自己眼光移置遠林分中，此真是自望自。蓋二先生皆用‘倩女離魂’法作詩也。”聖歎今日讀《西廂》，不覺失笑，因寄語斫山：“卿前謂我言王、杜俱用‘倩女離魂’法作詩，原來只是用得一遙字也。”⁹²

Jin Shengtan's commentary, which primarily comes from his quotation of a friend's speech, explicates poetics of self-division inspired by the story of Qiannü's wandering soul. The trope of a girl's wandering soul first appears in Chen Xuanyou's 陳玄祐 (fl.780s) Tang tale *Wandering Soul* 離魂記. The tale has many adaptations, and the most famous one is Zheng Guangzu's 鄭光祖 (13th-early 14th century) Yuan *zaju* drama *Enchanted by Blue Lattice, Qiannü's Soul Goes Wandering* 迷青瑣倩女離魂, in which Qiannü pines for her departed lover so much that while her body is left on the sick bed her soul wanders far to visit him. Since Qiannü's body and her soul are played by the female lead 正旦 and the ghost-female lead 魂旦 respectively, the play allows the dramatic juxtaposition of the two. The trope of the wandering soul reoccurs in Tang Xianzu's 湯顯祖 (1550-1616) southern drama, *The Peony Pavilion* 牡丹亭, and Hong Sheng's 洪昇 (1645-1705) southern drama, *Palace of Lasting Life* 長生殿; in the latter the encounter of the Consort Yang with her wandering soul creates striking stage effects.⁹³ Jin Shengtan appropriates the trope of wandering soul to interpret poetry, adding dramatic effect and psychological depth to poetry. Most striking about the encounter of the body and the wandering soul is their mutual gaze; the

⁹² Zhang Guoguang 張國光, ed., *Jin Shengtan piben Xixiangji* 金聖歎批本西廂記 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986), pp. 101-2.

⁹³ *Palace of Lasting Life*, act 37.

wandering soul allows the body to look at him/her without the aid of any reflective surface. Jin Shengtan reads this dramatic moment of seeing one's own soul into poems by Du Fu 杜甫 (712-770) and Wang Wei 王維 (699 or 701-761). Du Fu's couplet is from his poem "Moon Night" 月夜.

Tonight the moon in Fuzhou,
She looks at it alone in the boudoir.
It is pitiable that my little kids far away
Cannot understand (their mother's) longing for Chang'an.
Fragrant mist moistens her cloud-like hair,
In the clear light her jade arms are cold.
When would (we) lean against the curtain that allows the moonlight to pass through
And the moonlight would shine on both our faces, tears dry?
今夜鄜州月，閨中只獨看。遙憐小兒女，未解憶長安。
香霧雲鬟濕，清輝玉臂寒。何時倚虛幌，雙照淚痕干。⁹⁴

This poem was written when Du Fu was in Chang'an and his family was in Fuzhou. The poem describes Du Fu's imagination that his family was missing him: the first couplet describes his wife looking at the moon alone, and since the moon is shared by everyone, her looking at the moon implies missing him who is under the same moonlight at the same time. The second couplet describes Du Fu imagines his children unable to understand their mother's sadness; the third couplet gives a close-up description of the pining wife; the last couplet imagines the day when the couple will be together. Jin Shengtan's point is that while Du Fu describes his family missing him the poem is actually about Du Fu missing his family. The idea that Du Fu projects his feeling onto his family in this poem is shared by other late Ming early Qing critics. For instance, Wang Sishuang 王嗣爽 (1566-1648) interprets three layers of feelings in this poem in his *Conjectures of Du Fu's Poetry* 杜臆, a critical work on Du Fu's poetry that was finished around 1646. Wang Sishuang's interpretation shows an affinity with Wang Fuzhi and Jin Shengtan in

⁹⁴ Qiu Zhao'ao 仇兆鰲, *Dushi xiangzhu* 杜詩詳注, 4. 309.

illustrating the intricacies of poetic feelings. In Wang Sishuang's interpretation, the first layer of feelings is Du Fu missing his family by writing about his wife missing him; the second layer is Du Fu's thinking of his children being too young to miss him; the third layer is Du Fu's imagination of being with his family in the future. After pointing out the subtlety of feelings in the poem, Wang Sishuang applauds Du Fu as the one "possessed with utmost feelings" 鍾情之至, apparently reflecting his own debt to the late Ming cult of emotion. Jin Shengtian reads the same thing into this poem, but his focus is on the poet's encounter with his own soul; soul in this context means subtle, inexplicable feelings. In Jin's interpretation Du Fu places (or displaces) his own feelings for his family in the mental image of his wife missing him; therefore when Du Fu externalizes his mental image in poetic phrases he encounters his own feeling, or in other words, his soul. Jin Shengtian calls this moment of encounter "one pining for oneself" 自憶自.

Wang Wei's couplet is from his poem "Climbing the Small Terrace of Pei Di" 登裴秀才迪小臺.⁹⁵

In my everyday life, without leaving the house,
I look at the cloudy mountains that fill my eyes.
The setting sun goes down beside a bird,
Autumn plains, calm beyond people.
I know that far away at the border of the distant forest
He cannot see my eaves.
The fine guest often comes with the sunlight,
Don't lock the door and be prepared to respond to his knock.
端居不出戶，滿目望雲山。落日鳥邊下，秋原人外閑。
遙知遠林際，不見此檐間。好客多乘月，應門莫上關。

This poem describes the reclusive poet climbing his friend Pei Di's terrace and enjoying the broad horizon made possible by the altitude. The third couplet quoted in Jin Shengtian's commentary describes the poet gazing far into the distance and thinking that a person in the far

⁹⁵ *Quan tang shi* 全唐詩, 126.46.

forest—if anyone is there—would not be able to see the eaves under which the poet himself is standing. Jin Shengtan’s reading is that the poet places (or displaces) his perspective into the person in the far forest. Therefore the poet’s thought that the person in the far forest cannot see the terrace where the poet is standing is actually the poet’s imagination of being in the far forest and not able to see himself. Jin Shengtan calls this form of encountering one’s soul “one gazing at oneself” 自望自.

The poetry interpretations of Wang Fuzhi and Jin Shengtan are derived from the same late Ming cultural legacy, centering on the intricate play of feeling, visibility, and self-division. The central concern of their interpretations is the representation of poetic feeling. They both emphasize that what seems to be perceived reality in poetry is actually mental image, complicating the relationship between poetic scene and poetic feeling. As mentioned above in the discussion of Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics, shadow evokes ghost/soul and is thought to enclose it. Wang Fuzhi’s “shadow” and Jin Shengtan’s “wandering soul” echo each other, both referring to invisible, elusive feeling, and they both use feeling as a broad term that defines one’s nature, subjectivity, consciousness, and existence. Their interpretations are both highly visual, reflecting the influence of theatrical performance. Wang Fuzhi’s fascination with shadow play and Jin Shengtan’s interest in the dramatic trope of wandering soul indicate their explorations of the fictional dimension of poetry and the concept of self-division. Chinese classical poetry is intended to record real events and occasions, but their interpretations suggest that fiction is necessary in poetry to achieve the more real, rich, and subtle representation of feeling. Self-division, tinged with narcissism in Jin’s interpretation, vividly manifests in the trope of the body seeing soul; the theme of narcissism is not emphasized in Wang Fuzhi’s critical term “catching

shadow,” but the term exemplifies Wang Fuzhi’s equal interest in examining the intangible dimension of self.

Modern Chinese scholar Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書 (1910-1998) has a wonderful analysis of the poetic technique discussed above, covering rich examples in Chinese literary history from *the Book of Songs* to Wang Guowei’s 王國維 (1877-1927) lyric. The only critical source Qian cites is Jin Shengtan’s commentary on Qiannü’s wandering soul, indicating that while poets have unconsciously practiced this technique it was not theorized until the age of Jin Shengtan. Qian suggests that the technique should be traced back to poems written as early as those from the *Book of Songs*, without noticing that Wang Fuzhi pointed this out earlier in his “Interpretations of Poetry,” and that the way Qian reads poems from the *Book of Songs* is the same as Wang Fuzhi’s reading of “Out of the Carriage.” Qian Zhongshu’s analysis of this poetic technique nicely summarizes some of its characteristics that are discussed above. “(The poet) invents fiction that is based on reality, and creates poetic worlds by mixing imagination with memory.” 據實虛構, 以想象與懷憶融合而造詩境. “(The poet) experiences self-division in order to have introspection and makes conjectures of the other person’s feelings by projecting his own feelings onto the other; when the poet writes about the other person’s mind, he thinks the other person must miss him if he misses the other person; when the poet describes scenes, he sees the other person gazing at him if he gazes at the other person.” 分身以自省, 推己以付他; 寫心行則我思人乃想人必思我,……寫景狀則我視人乃見人適視我.⁹⁶ Qian also points out the affinity between this poetic technique and mediated reflections of multiple mirrors explicated in Buddhism. The

⁹⁶ *Guanzhuibian* 管錐編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 1. 114.

famous mirror installation made by monk Fazang 法藏 (643-712), one of the founders of the Huayan 华严 School, is an example of mediated reflections of multiple mirrors.

He took ten mirrors and arranged them so that one occupied each of the eight compass-points, with one above and one below, in such a way that they all faced one another, a little over ten feet apart. He then placed the figure of a Buddha at the center, and illuminated it with a torch so that its images were reflected back and forth. Thus his students came to understand the theory of passing from “sea and land” in the world of infinity.⁹⁷

In this mirror installation the figure of a Buddha at the center signifies the source of enlightenment that illuminates every object, just as the moon gives rise to an infinite number of separate reflections on the wavelets of an expanse of water. The mirror installation shows that every object in the universe mirrors every other object. The first mirror reflects the second mirror and the second mirror further reflects what is reflected in the first mirror, and so on. The infinite mirror reflection is analogous to the poetic technique of a poet projecting his feelings onto the person he misses or sees,⁹⁸ the technique called “catching shadow” and “wandering soul” by Wang Fuzhi and Jin Shengtian respectively.

Cognitive Theory of Buddhism

Both Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows and his critical term “capturing shadow” show the influence of Buddhism. It is not a coincidence that Wang Fuzhi was devoted to studying Buddhism as well as *Zhuangzi* in his later years while referring to shadow repeatedly in poems, lyrics, and poetry commentary. His note on one of his seven poems on the shadow of bamboo indicates that he wrote the treatise “Main Threads of Dharma-character” 相宗絡索 at the request

⁹⁷ T50:732 a28-b02, 高僧傳, vol. 5, 法藏傳. Translation is from Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, 4.1:92.

⁹⁸ *Guanzhuibian*, p. 115.

of Monk Xiankai 先開 in 1681⁹⁹, showing his knowledge of the Dharma-character 法相 school, which develops from the Yogâcāra 瑜伽行派 school of Buddhism, one of the two main branches of Mahāyāna philosophy. The central tenet of the Yogâcāra school is that the ignorance and affliction experienced by human beings are due to the erroneous closure of consciousness, and therefore the Yogâcāra school and the Dharma-character school are also called Consciousness-only 唯識 school. Wang Fuzhi's treaty explains (though not without mistakes) seminal terms of cognitive theory of the Dharma-character school. The terms particularly relevant to his lyrics and poetry commentary under discussion are eight consciousnesses 八識, three bases of cognition 三量, and three objects of consciousness 三境. Next I will first give brief standard explanations of these terms, and then give Wang Fuzhi's detailed explanations of three bases of cognition and three objects of consciousness.

Eight consciousnesses include the first five consciousnesses that correspond to the five sensory perceptions. They operate based on the five faculties: sight 眼根, hearing 耳根, taste 味根, the olfactory faculty 鼻根, and the tactile faculty 觸根. The sixth *mano* consciousness 意識 is the thinking region of conscious thought. It includes the gathering of sensory perceptions, conducting value judgments, calculation, emotion, and intention. The seventh *manas* 末那識, also connotatively called the “defiled mental consciousness,” is hypothesized to be the origin of the sense of a self. It is characterized as being continually examining and assessing, as opposed to the previous six consciousnesses that are discontinuous. It is considered to be the cause of all illusion arising from assuming that there is a real, continuous self. The eighth *ālayavijñāna* 阿賴耶識 is the most fundamental region of consciousness, functioning as the repository of all the

⁹⁹ “Nan Tianwo gives me the title of the shadow of bamboo and I rhyme with Xu Tianchi's seven poems that use rhymes ‘fragrance’ and ‘incense’” 南天窩授竹影題用徐天池香烟韻七首. “Xiangzong luosuo” is included in *Chuanshan quanshu*, vol. 13, pp. 525-610.

impressions from one's experiences. Three bases of cognition are the valid cognition of direct perception 現量, inference or reasoning 比量, and mistaken perception or cognition 非量. Three objects of consciousness are objects as they are in themselves 性境, which are correct objects of cognition; image-only objects 獨影境, objects arbitrarily manifested from a subjective view with no relationship to any raw substance, and objects that derive from raw substance but are mistakenly perceived 帶質境.

Wang Fuzhi explains objects of consciousness as “objects/worlds represented in consciousness” 識中所現之境界. He thinks that the first five consciousnesses construct correct objects of cognition, and that when the sixth *mano* consciousness follows the first five consciousnesses without having differentiation and reflection it also constructs correct objects of cognition. He believes that only the sixth *mano* consciousness constructs image-only objects, which can be classified into those that have raw substance (memory) and those that do not have raw substance (illusion). He also classifies objects that derive from raw substance, but are mistakenly perceived, into two categories. The first category is constructed by the sixth *mano* consciousness, and the second is constructed by the seventh *manas*. The Chinese idiom that one mistakes the reflection of a bow in a wine cup for the shadow of a snake 杯弓蛇影 is a good example of the first category of objects. The second category of objects refers to illusions arising from attachment to the notion of an enduring, inherent self, which is rooted in the seventh *manas*. The three objects of consciousness correspond to the three bases of cognition respectively. Wang Fuzhi explains that the valid cognition of direct perception has three features: present, ready-made, and real. The valid cognition of direct perception is present, because it has no relationship with memory; it is ready-made, because it is so spontaneous that it does not rely on reflection or calculation; it is real because it displays objects as they are. The valid cognition of direct perception is a mode of

function for the first five consciousnesses and the aspect of the sixth *mano* consciousness that arises in tandem with the five consciousnesses. It constructs correct objects of cognition. Inference or reasoning is a mode of function for the sixth *mano* consciousness, constructing image-only objects. Mistaken perception or cognition is a mode of function for the seventh *manas*, constructing objects that derive from raw substance but are mistakenly perceived.

Wang Fuzhi's detailed explications of eight consciousnesses, three objects of consciousness, and three bases of cognition shed new light on his critical term "catching shadow" and his lyrics on shadow. As discussed above, we can use modern terminology to explain shadow as mental picture, the externalization and objectification of invisible feelings. But if we take into account the influence of Buddhism and use Wang Fuzhi's Buddhist terminology, we can explain shadow as objects represented in consciousness 識中所現之境界. Objects represented in consciousness are correct or illusory objects constructed by consciousness. In this sense, Wang Fuzhi's critical term "catching shadow" indicates that poetry describes objects represented in consciousness instead of objects in reality. Indeed he particularly applauds poetry that is written from the valid cognition of direct perception and represents correct objects of cognition.¹⁰⁰ This belief in writing objects of cognition naturally leads to the dissolution of the boundary between reality and imagination both in the reading and writing of poetry. Rereading Wang Fuzhi's lyrics on shadows against the backdrop of the cognitive theory of Buddhism reveals his practice of constructing objects of consciousness in writing. From the perspective of Buddhism, everything in the world is not real, but a reflection of consciousness; shadows and skeleton/soul—another equivalent of shadow—in Wang Fuzhi's lyrics are objects of consciousness and literary exemplifications of the cognitive theory of Buddhism.

¹⁰⁰ *Jiangzhai shihua*, 2.5, p. 147.

The fact that the cognitive theory of Buddhism is a theoretical source of Wang Fuzhi's lyrics indicates the psychological depth of his writing, the dimension that illuminates his choice of shadow as a poetic theme. Rather than writing about natural objects, theatrical figures, the dead, and himself directly, Wang Fuzhi writes about shadows of nature, theatrical figures and himself, as well as the skeleton/soul of the dead. Though writing about shadow and skeleton/soul is not unprecedented in Chinese literature, he writes about them as doubles, suggesting his exploration of the concept of theatrical self-division and his reinterpretation of the relationship between life and theater. The doubles in his lyrics communicate with, confront, or interrogate their host objects as well as evoke contemplations of their host objects. The doubles complicate an otherwise clear, straightforward value system that celebrates romantic love, heroism, and the triumph of justice. Wang Fuzhi's writing on the complex, ambiguous value system no doubt reflects on the challenges of his time, when a once stable political and moral structure collapsed. By combining the metaphor of life as a play with *Zhuangzi* philosophy, Wang Fuzhi addresses his anxiety about the collapse of moral structure. In his lyrics on shadows, theatrical culture offers vocabularies and literary frameworks, whereas *Zhuangzi* philosophy and Buddhism, two theoretical sources that resonate with theatricality respectively (both *Zhuangzi* philosophy and Buddhism resonate with metaphors of life as a play; *Zhuangzi* relativism coincides with the playful dissolution of moral judgment; the Buddhist teaching of infinite mirror reflections coincides with theatrical self-division), allow him to experiment with the concept of self-division and to explore fundamental issues of fate and free will at a time of political and moral collapse.

Coda

In the second chapter of *Dreaming by the Book*, Elaine Scarry discusses the ways writers achieve the perceptual mimesis of the solidity in verbal arts. One way is to use "one in-itself-

weightless image to calibrate and confirm the weightedness of a second in-itself-weightless image...by the tactile brush of one image across the surface of the other.”¹⁰¹ Elaine Scarry cites Proust’s description of the bright images from a magic lantern playing across the walls of his childhood room at Combray in *Remembrance of Things Past*, Hardy’s description of kissing a shaded image on a wall in *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, among others, to prove the above rule that overlaying the wall’s opaqueness with impalpable iridescence contributes to creating the solidity of the wall. She writes that some physical objects, such as shadow, mist, gauze, and fog “have features that more closely approximate the phenomenology of imaginary objects than do others,”¹⁰² and argues that when the mental images of these objects with the properties of transparency and thinness are brushed against the mental images of dense and solid objects, writers can accomplish realistic texture of their fictional worlds. Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows and his critical term “catching shadow” offer different exemplifications for the analysis of mental pictures than the works of Proust, Hardy and other European writers. If shadows contribute to accomplishing the realistic texture of fiction in the works of writers quoted in Elaine Scarry’s book, Wang Fuzhi’s descriptions of his shadow on the wall, shadows of natural objects moving across space, and shadows of figures in theatrical performances do not aim to construct a realistic world; rather, they aim to add a fictional dimension to Chinese literary genres where fiction is not supposed to exist.

Wang Fuzhi’s lyrics on shadows and his critical term “catching shadows” indicate the theatrical turn in early Qing lyricism. Late Ming rhetoric of theatrical culture offers the vocabulary and theme for his lyrics, whereas *Zhuangzi* philosophy and Buddhism, two theoretical sources that resonate with theatricality respectively, allow him to experiment with the

¹⁰¹ Elaine Scarry, *Dreaming by the Book* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 28.

¹⁰² Ibid. p. 22.

concept of self-division and to explore the issues of selfhood, free will, life, and death. The theatrical turn is at the same time a turn of inwardness, characterized by Wang Fuzhi's exploration of lyrical interiority and expansion of poetic consciousness. In his lyrics, rather than writing about theatrical figures and himself directly, he writes about their shadows as psychological doubles. The doubles complicate an otherwise clear, straightforward value system that celebrates romantic love and heroism. In his poetic commentary, the multilayered representation of consciousness, the disintegration of the continuity of exterior events, and shifting poetic viewpoints define a turn from reality to representation and interiority. For a scholar who retired from the world of political chaos and moral collapse to his study, this turn of inwardness seems to be an inevitable choice, but it also gives new possibilities to literary creation and criticism.

Chapter Four

History as Puppet Theater: Ballad Narratives on History

By the mid-seventeenth century, Chinese literati had experimented with the topic of the ups and downs of Chinese history in almost all genres. One of the shared goals of this historical writing was to provide future generations with moral lessons by recording past events. The political turmoil of the Ming-Qing transition intensified politically marginalized Chinese literati's interest in transmitting moral lessons through historical writing. This paper discusses ballad narratives on Chinese history written by early Qing writers, focusing on Jia Fuxi's (1590-1674) 賈鳳西 *Drum-Ballad on History through the Ages* 歷代史略鼓詞 and Gui Zhuang's 歸莊 (1613-1673) *sanqu* lyric *Remnant Sound of Playing the Zhu* 擊筑餘音. The paper has three sections. In the first section, I introduce Yang Shen 楊慎 (1488-1559) and his *Ballad-Narrative on History through the Ages* 歷代史略詞話 (also titled *The Prosimetrical Narrative of Twenty-one Histories* 廿一史彈詞), because Yang Shen can be considered to be a predecessor of Jia Fuxi and Gui Zhuang in his eccentricity, his theatrical views of history, and the format of ballad narrative on history. In the second section, I first analyze Jia Fuxi's celebration of the pursuit of profit and power in his biography and poetry and the ways in which his mindset subverts Confucian ideology. Second, I discuss his drum ballad on Chinese history. He views historical actors as puppets driven by selfish motives, creating a stage upon which life is enacted as a virtual theater. His performative view of history and his use of ribald humor challenge Confucian historiographical principles. Third, I explore the contradiction between his professed ideological standpoint and his morally based criticism of history, as well as his use of the rhetoric of theater to resolve the contradiction. Like many early Qing Chinese literati, Jia was inevitably confronted by the tension between the intellectual sources that constituted an intrinsic part of his value

system and the political circumstances of the early Qing that called his value system into question. In the third section, I first discuss descriptions of Gui Zhuang's eccentric personality by his contemporaries and his emulation of Gao Jianli 高漸離, the *zhu* player who plays an important role in the account of the assassin Jing Ke in *Shiji*. Then I analyze Gui Zhuang's view that historical actors are puppets and historians are puppet players. He writes history in *sanqu* lyric because the popular genre allows him to be a dramatist-historian and gives him the expressive freedom that is suppressed in poetry and historiography. Finally, I analyze the ways in which the formal features of *sanqu* lyric allow him to lambaste the Qing regime and the Southern Ming court.

My analyses of Yang Shen, Jia Fuxi and Gui Zhuang reveal the relationship between their eccentric personalities and their choice of using popular/low genres to write Chinese history, as well as the ways whereby the rhetorical possibilities generated by popular genres allow them to rewrite the conventions of historiography. Writing history in popular/low genres was a gesture of resistance for the literati who were removed from the political center or lived under repressive regimes. Writing history in popular/low genres also allowed them to explore the idea of the commensurability between life and theater and inspired them to express historical views, describe historical events, and judge historical actors in ways impossible in historiography and poetry.

Yang Shen's Ballad Narrative on History

Yang Shen is now famous for his encyclopedic knowledge and said to be the most prodigious writer of the Ming dynasty.¹ Many anecdotes describe his eccentric behavior and his engagement

¹ Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉, *Mingshi* 明史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), vol. 192, p. 5083.

in popular genres after his banishment to Yunnan 雲南, one of the remotest areas of China at that time. The anecdotes of Yang Shen's eccentric personality were popular since the late Ming, and late Ming literati emphasized his political aspirations behind the mask of eccentricity.

Yang Shen's banishment was a result of his involvement in the Great Rites Controversy that lasted from 1521 to 1524, led by his father the Grand Secretary Yang Tinghe 楊廷和 (1459-1529) and other cabinet officials on the one side and the newly enthroned Jiajing Emperor 嘉靖 (r. 1522-1566) and his favorites on the other. The controversy centered on the posthumous honorary title of the Jiajing Emperor's father. The Jiajing Emperor succeeded his cousin the Zhengde Emperor (r. 1506-1521), who did not leave any male descendant. Yang Tinghe and other cabinet officials left from the Zhengde Emperor's reign argued that according to ritual precedents, the Jiajing Emperor inherited the throne as a side-branch and hence should take the Zhengde Emperor's lineage, regarding the latter's father, the Emperor Hongzhi (r. 1488-1505), as posthumous father. Refusing to compromise, the Jiajing Emperor attempted to honor his own father posthumously as emperor. The Jiajing emperor gradually got the upper hand with the support of newly appointed officials. In 1524 Yang Shen collaborated with a group of officials to impeach those who supported the emperor's idea on the ground of their violation of rites. Overruled by the emperor, they banged the gate of the imperial palace to insist upon remonstrance. Several leaders of the event were imprisoned, but Yang Shen kept on leading others to bang the gate and weep in lamentation. The struggle between the emperor and the young generation of officials on the one side and the old generation of cabinet officials on the other ended with the success of the former. Yang Tinghe was forced to retire. Yang Shen barely survived the humiliating punishment of flagellation at the court, and then was banished to Yunnan, where he stayed until his death. Yang Shen offended the emperor to such a degree that

even after his banishment the emperor checked on him frequently, and only felt relieved when hearing that he was aged and ill.²

The above experience in the court partly explains Yang Shen's unorthodox life in Yunnan, which is elaborated in many historical, literary, and pictorial accounts. In the official history of the Ming dynasty, it is said that he let himself go and indulged in wine 縱酒自放.³ In a friend's letter, he is said to "ignore good manners, abandon himself to self-indulgence, delight in erotic songs, and pay much attention to beautiful women" 脫略禮度, 放浪形骸, 陶情乎艷曲, 耽意乎美色.⁴ A famous anecdote of Yang Shen recorded by a slightly later official-scholar Wang Shenzhen 王世貞 (1526-1590) almost made Yang Shen a fashion icon in the late Ming. "Once he (Yang Shen) was drunk, he powdered his face and made two knot-like buns decorated with flowers. His students carried him in a sedan, followed by singing girls who held wine cups in hands. They paraded the city without any shame" 嘗醉, 胡粉傅面, 作雙丫髻插花, 門生舁之, 諸伎捧觴, 遊行城市, 了不為忤.⁵ Yang Shen's image as an unrestrained, eccentric talent with the feminine hairstyle inspired many late-Ming works. Shen Zizheng 沈自徵 (1591-1641) wrote the northern drama (*zaju*) *Buns with Flowers* 簪花髻, featuring Yang Shen as the protagonist.⁶ Chen Hongshou 陳洪綬 (1598-1652) not only painted *Sheng'an (Yang Shen) Wearing Flowers in the*

² *Minglun dadian* 明倫大典, vol. 16, cited in Wang Wencai 王文才, *Yang Shen xuepu* 楊慎學譜 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1988). pp. 56-64; *Mingshi*, vol. 191, p. 5068-70, vol. 192, p. 5082-3. The source of the anecdote of the Jiajing Emperor's secret surveillance on Yang Shen is Zhu Ru's 朱茹 "Preface to Yang Sheng'an's Poetry Collection" 楊升庵詩集敘, see *Yang Shen xuepu*, p.113.

³ *Mingshi*, vol. 192, p. 5083.

⁴ Liu Gonghui's 劉公繪 letter to Yang Shen, cited in Jian Shaofang's 簡紹芳 *Yang Wenxian sheng'an xiansheng nianpu* 楊文憲升庵先生年譜.

⁵ Wang Shizhen, *Yiyuan zhiyan* 藝苑卮言, vol. 6, in Ding Fubao 丁福保, ed., *Lidai shihua xubian* 歷代詩話續編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983) p. 1053.

⁶ Shen Tai 沈泰, ed., *Sheng Ming zaju chuji* 盛明雜劇初集, vol. 14.

Hair 升庵簪花圖, but also used the iconic image of Yang Shen to portray Tao Qian 陶潛 (ca.369-427), the most renowned recluse-poet, in *Tao Yuanming Wearing Flowers* 陶淵明簪花圖, where Tao Yuanming, with flowers in his hair, is accompanied by beautiful women who hold flowers in hands, and the album-leaf paintings *Stories of Tao Yuanming* 陶淵明故事圖, in which Tao Yuanming, still a head of flowers, is carried by two men in a sedan chair. These artistic works not only showed the late-Ming iconoclastic literati's identification with Yang Shen, but also suggested that Yang Shen's eccentric image was used to reinterpret one of the most idolized poet in Chinese history and hence to subtly reinterpret tradition. The image of the eccentric literatus who abandoned himself to passion was superimposed upon Tao Yuanming, who had been celebrated as a cultural hero for his rational transcendence of the fear of death and his righteous refusal to be involved in unjust politics, among other things. The overlapping of the two images characterized the changes of the late-Ming cultural world. The late Ming literati read more meanings into Yang Shen's eccentric gestures than self-indulgence. Wang Shizhen wrote that Yang Shen behaved eccentrically "because he would rather wear out his aspiration than let it slide into desolation" 壯心不堪牢落, 故耗磨之耳.⁷ Qi Biaoja 祁彪佳 (1602-1645) commented that Yang Shen "was able to have swaggering abandon in solitude ... and let us see his tears in song and laughter." 於寂寥中能豪爽...於歌笑中見哭泣.⁸

Ballad-Narrative on History through the Ages embodies Yang Shen's aspirations that could only be expressed in song and laughter. It is said that he was good at playing the *pipa*, a four-

⁷ Ibid., p. 1054.

⁸ Qi Biaoja's comment on *Buns with Flowers* 簪花髻, in *Yuanshantang jupin* 遠山堂劇品, p. 2.

stringed plucked instrument.⁹ His interest in music was repressed while he was an official in the court, but was rekindled after the banishment. During his stay in Yunnan, Yang Shen found refuge in music. He relieved his frustration by teaching local people to sing drum ballads. “Heart broken, he lodged in the remote frontier, /teaching old women in the south to sing the drum ballad in his leisure time.” 傷心形影寄邊陲, 閑教蠻婆唱鼓詞.¹⁰

The format of *Ballad-Narrative on History through Ages* is inventive. It has ten parts. The first part is an introduction, and the rest, comprising nine parts, covers Chinese history from pre-historical antiquity to the Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368). Each part begins with a preface composed of a lyric and a seven-syllable poem, and ends with an epilogue composed of a couplet or a poem that summarizes the part, a lyric, and a couplet that refers readers to the next part. In the middle section of each part, vernacular prose that narrates the history of each dynasty is interspersed among three-syllable and four-syllable verse that lists the genealogy of the rulers of each dynasty and comments on everyone’s success and failure. The format of weaving prose with verse is new, but the content of the middle section is similar to official history in recording historical facts and passing on moral lessons. The preface and epilogue of each part express Yang Shen’s thoughts of the meaning of history, the task of historians, and the purpose of writing history. My analysis of *Ballad-Narrative on History through the Ages* will focus on these issues.

Yang Shen’s notion of the purpose of writing history is more conventional than his notions of the meaning of history and the task of historians. “All my discussions are in accord with the

⁹ Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558-1639), “Preface to Mr. Yang Sheng’an’s *The Prosimetrical Narrative of Twenty-one Histories*,” cited in Wang Wencai, Wan Guangzhi 萬光治 eds., *Yang Sheng’an congshu* 楊升庵叢書 (Chengdu, Tiandi, 2002), vol. 4, p. 572.

¹⁰ *Yang Shen xuepu*, p. 352.

Duke of Zhou's rites¹¹. /All my judgments follow the writings of Confucius the sage. /(My narrative) suppresses the evil, respects the virtuous, /praises the loyal and the filial, and rewards worthies.” 講談盡合周公禮，褒貶咸遵孔聖文。按捺奸邪尊有道，讚揚忠孝獎賢人。¹² All these statements are not very different from those in official history. However, Yang Shen's notions of the meaning of history and the task of historians reflect the intellectual world of his time, when theater and performance became metaphors for life. The idea that human life is a theater is the thread uniting all the parts of *Ballad-Narrative on History through the Ages*. For example, after the account of the ups and downs of the three ancient dynasties, Xia, Shang, and Zhou, Yang Shen summarizes, “They occupied the stage to fight in vain like puppets in a theater. In a flash, everything disappeared, becoming icicles on fire.” 乾打鬧，占排場，戲棚傀儡；轉頭間，消滅卻，火上冰凌。¹³ Human activities make a lively play, but its vitality lasts only temporarily, in the same way that fire gives way to cold desolation when it extinguishes. This idea of human life ending up being empty is not new in Chinese literature. A more conventional metaphor for the emptiness of human life is dream, and indeed the two metaphors are juxtaposed in Yang Shen's narrative. “Fame and wealth are left in laughter and small talks. When one turns back, life is nothing but a dream of the spring.” 功名富貴談笑中，回首一場春夢。 “No matter who is strong and who is weak, everything ends up being empty. (What has happened) becomes a play in the theater of puppets.” 誰強誰弱總成空，傀儡棚中搬弄。¹⁴ The multiple meanings of the theater make it a more complex metaphor for life than the other common analogy, life as a dream. All

¹¹ This refers to the Duke of Zhou of the Western Zhou, who helped King Wu found the Western Zhou and established the *Rites of Zhou* 周禮.

¹² Section one, “Introduction” 總說, *Ballad-Narrative on History through the Ages*, in *Yang Sheng'an congshu*, vol. 4, p. 576.

¹³ Section two, “On the Three Dynasties” 說三代, p. 586.

¹⁴ Ibid.

the actions and events of human life are performed in the theater, and like all the actions and deeds that can never outlast the moment of their realization, a play is finite with a beginning and an end (though it could be repeated again and again). Thus the realization of all the human actions and events only predicts their ruin, if we remember Zhuangzi's dialectics that "their completeness is their impairment" 其成也, 毀也.¹⁵ However, a play is not simply finite in the same sense as a dream of the spring, which leaves no trace and will only be remembered with the help of words, because the play is written in words and thus immortalized. This meaning is expressed clearly in the above quote "No matter who is strong and who is weak, everything ends up being empty. (What has happened) becomes a play in the theater of puppets." The fights between the strong and the weak amount indeed only to a temporary performance, but even when these fights leave no traces, they are remembered in the theater. Insofar as theater can be both human action and fabrication, i.e. the written word,¹⁶ it is the metaphor for both temporary human life and ever-lasting history, and human beings are actors in the sense that they both act and perform characters in a dramatic production. The unification of human action and history in the theatrical metaphor actually dissolves one important distinction between action and fabrication. While fabrication has a definite beginning and a predictable end, the actions of men leave a chain of happenings whose outcome they are unable to control.¹⁷ The general statement that life is empty, as we see in Yang Shen's ballad-narrative and many Chinese literary texts, attributes a pessimistic predictability to the unpredictable outcome of human action. The feeling of fatalistic emptiness in turn contributes to an intensified interest in the value of fabrication. One

¹⁵ "Discussion on Making All Things Equal" 齊物論, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 70, Burton Watson's translation.

¹⁶ Here I use fabrication to refer to the written word, following Hannah Arendt's discussion of spoken word and all the actions and deeds vs. fabrication in Greek philosophy. See Hannah Arendt, "The Concept of History," in *Between Past and Future* (Penguin Books, 2006), p. 44.

¹⁷ "The Concept of History," p. 59-60.

implicit question that frequently features in Chinese literary texts is: What is left after empty life, and the answer is often the written word, as is affirmed by the texts themselves. According to the ancient Greek concept of history, history saves “human deeds from the futility that comes from oblivion,” and the task of the poet and historiographer consists in “translating action and speech into ... fabrication which eventually becomes the written word.”¹⁸ The Chinese analogy of this concept of history can be found in Sima Qian’s “A Letter to Ren’an” 報任安書, “It is because they (the ancients) have feelings all the deeper, more intense and turned inward for being unexpressed; that is why they tell of what happened in the past, thinking of those in the ages to come. ... They withdrew from the world and wrote to vent their pent-up frustrations and discontent, hoping to leave their writings as a testimony to their ideas and aspirations.” 此人皆意有所鬱結, 不得通其道, 故述往事, 思來者. ... 退而論書策, 以抒其憤, 思垂空文以自見.¹⁹ Likewise, Yang Shen thinks that history, i.e. written accounts, saves human life from emptiness because written words are permanent. “Who was able, who was capable, and who was incapable, the reasons of their actions can be seen in a few lines of historical accounts” 誰會誰能誰不濟, 幾行青史見原因; “When the splendor (of the Sui and Tang dynasties) is gone, no trace can be found. Their inflated reputation is left on paper sheets for us to read” 豪華一去無蹤跡, 留得虛名紙上看; “In order to know the sequence of events, I have looked up remnant accounts and broken bamboo strips²⁰” 要知去跡來蹤, 檢盡殘編斷簡; “I have looked up remnant accounts and broken bamboo strips, carefully examining the rise and fall of these dynasties” 檢盡殘篇並斷簡, 細數興亡; “I have looked up remnant accounts and broken bamboo strips, examining and comparing the

¹⁸ “The Concept of History,” pp. 41, 44.

¹⁹ *Quan Han wen* 全漢文, 26. 5-7, translation from Wai-ye Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 166.

²⁰ Ancient Chinese books were written on bamboo strips. Broken bamboo strips mean fragments of book.

past, present, and future.” 檢盡殘篇並斷簡，參同往古共來今。²¹ “Remnant accounts and broken bamboo sheets” are textual counterparts of broken mountains and remnant waters, which remain as the permanent backdrop of futile, temporary activities of men. “Broken mountains and remnant waters remain the same year after year, but those who aspired to be kings cannot be seen.” 殘山剩水年年在，不見圖王霸業人。²²

Written words rise to the immortality of the everlasting natural universe, and from the view of Yang Shen, the unrestrained, banished literatus who was interested in music and popular storytelling, written words are often interchangeable with oral transmission or even replaced by the latter. Oral transmission partakes of the immortality of nature and written words, but it adds playfulness and ridicule to serious dynastic history. Thus oral transmission emphasizes the idea that history is nothing but a theater from a different perspective, since one intrinsic nature of the theater is entertainment. “Dragons and tigers fight with each other, efforts in vain. They simply end up being a bout of talk and laughter.” 龍爭虎鬥漫劬勞，落得一場談笑. “Thousands of years are ridiculed in a bout of talk and laughter. How many people know its meaning? 千年調一場談笑，幾個人知道？”²³ If a historian is the author of remnant accounts and broken bamboo sheets, a bout of talk and laugh comes from the fisherman and the woodcutter. The fisherman and the woodcutter often feature as two archetypes of wise men in Chinese philosophical and literary works, partly because fishing and woodcutting are the markers of a simple life, and the fisherman and the woodcutter are independent of political power. They are interlocutors of

²¹ Section four, “On Three Kingdoms and Two Jin Dynasties” 說三分兩晉, *Yang Sheng'an congshu*, vol. 4, p. 597; section seven “On the Sui and Tang Dynasties” 說隋唐二代, p. 620; section eight, “On the History of the Five Dynasties” 說五代史, p.630; section nine, “On Song, Liao, Jin, and Xia” 說宋遼金夏, p. 640; section nine, p. 641.

²² Section three, “On the Qin and Han” 說秦漢, p. 589.

²³ Section three, p. 594; section six, “On Five Barbarian Kingdoms’ Disturbance of China” 說五胡亂華, p. 611.

philosophy in Shao Yong's 邵雍 (1011-1077) treatise *Questions and Answers between the Fisher and the Woodsman* 漁樵問對. They are wise witnesses of history in lyrics and songs from the Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368), for example, "Right and wrong of the last thousands of years are in the overnight chitchat of the fisherman and the woodcutter" 千古是非心, 一夕漁樵話.²⁴ In the preface to the sixteenth-century musical piece, "Questions and Answers between the Fisherman and the Woodcutter" 漁樵問答, the fisherman and the woodcutter are storytellers of the rise and fall of dynasties. "The enterprise of the Han Dynasty is gone in vain with the flowing water. Half of the beautiful mountains and rivers are under the setting sunlight. The rise and fall from the past to the present is like the flipping of a hand, but blue mountains and green waters stay still. Of thousands of years, gain or loss, right or wrong, simply turns into the small talk of the fisherman and the woodcutter." 漢家事業空流水, 魏國山河半夕陽, 古今興廢有若反掌, 青山綠水則固無恙, 千載得失是非, 盡付之漁樵一話而已.²⁵ In Yang Shen's ballad-narrative the fisherman and the woodcutter are also storytellers, who are politically marginalized but possess insights to historical developments. "The white haired fisherman and the woodcutter are too lazy to do anything; they are nonchalant, leisurely talking about the past and the present, and discussing the rise and fall of the dynasties. 白髮漁樵諸事懶, 蕭散, 閒談今古論興亡. "Traces (of history) are kept by half a sheet of old paper. The speeches of the fisherman and the woodcutter tell the history of thousands of years." 半張故紙留蹤跡, 千古漁樵作話文.²⁶ All these thoughts of the rise and fall of dynasties, the meanings of historical accounts and oral transmission, and the role of

²⁴ Bai Pu 白樸, to the tune "Blessed East Plain" 慶東原.

²⁵ Xiao Luan 肖鸞 (1487-1561) *Xingzhuang tai yin buyi xu pu* 杏莊太音補遺續譜 (Beijing: Zhonghuo shudian, 2006), vol. 4, p. 51, reprint of Ming Jiajing jiwei (1559) edition.

²⁶ Section eight, p. 629.

the fisherman and the woodcutter are best represented in the most famous lyric from Yang Shen's ballad-narrative on history.

To the tune "Riverside Immortal" 臨江仙

Wave on wave the Yangzi River eastward rolls away, /Gone are all heroes with its spray on spray. /Success or failure, right or wrong, all turn out vain; /Only green mountains still remain /To see the setting sun's departing ray.

The white-haired fishers and woodsmen on the river isles, /are accustomed to the autumn moon and vernal breeze. /They make good company over a pot of wine. /So many events, past and present, /all melt into laughter and small talk.²⁷

滾滾長江東逝水，浪花淘盡英雄。是非成敗轉頭空。青山依舊在，幾度夕陽紅。白髮漁樵江渚上，慣看秋月春風。一壺濁酒喜相逢。古今多少事，都付笑談中。²⁸

Yang Shen was not a fisherman or a woodcutter, but as a banished official he obviously identified with politically marginalized critics like the fisherman and the woodcutter. In other words, the fisherman and the woodcutter are Yang Shen's dramatic roles. His ballad-narrative is exactly the talk and laugh of the fisherman and the woodcutter, and in this sense it is also a theater of puppets, with Yang Shen being the puppet player. As is pointed out by an early seventeenth century critic, "in short ballads and long songs, (Yang Shen) portrays the historical actors from the past to the present as puppets" 短詠長歌，傀儡千古。²⁹

Gentleman of Drum Clapper

Yang Shen's *Ballad-Narrative on History through the Ages* establishes the tradition of viewing history as the puppet theater and the storytelling of the fisherman and the woodcutter in ballad-narratives on history. Jia Fuxi renews the tradition in the context of political turmoil in that he dismisses Confucian teachings, which Yang Shen claims to follow in his ballad-narrative, and

²⁷ Yu Yuanchong's translation, with revisions.

²⁸ Section three, p.588. The lyric is widely known because the critic Mao Zonggang 毛宗崗 (1632-after 1709) puts it at the beginning of Luo Guanzhong's 羅貫中 (1330-1400) novel *Romance of Three Kingdoms* 三國演義.

²⁹ Song Fengxiang's 宋鳳翔 preface, written in 1623 to *The Ballad-Narrative of an Epitome of History*, quoted in *Yang Sheng'an congshu*, vol. 4, p. 657.

instead tries to deconstruct Confucian historiography in terms of his cynical view of human nature and the driving force of history.

What we now know about Jia Fuxi is largely based on “The Biography of the Gentleman of Wood Clapper” 木皮散客傳 written by the famous dramatist Kong Shangren’s 孔尚任 (1648-1718), whose father was Jia’s friend. According to the biography, Jia Fuxi was born to a scholar-official family in Shandong, but did not pass the examination in the Confucian Classics 明經 until his forties. He then became a county magistrate in 1639. Before Li Zicheng’s 李自成 (1606-1645) rebellion precipitated Ming collapse in 1644, he resigned his official post in the capital and returned home. Around 1651 he filled in the previous position in the newly established Qing government as the result of a county commandant’s coercion.³⁰ Only after a few months did he figure out a way to retire by persuading his superior to impeach him on account of negligence.³¹

“The Biography of the Gentleman of Wood Clapper” does not offer a chronology of Jia Fuxi’s life. Rather, it selects anecdotes, events, and quotes to portray Jia Fuxi’s eccentric personality and its social, intellectual backdrop. In the biography, Jia is said to be different from Confucian scholars and live his life in the way of Laozi and Zhuangzi. “His way of dealing with the world is similar to that of Laozi and Zhuangzi. He married, served in the government, and managed means of livelihood. As for marriage, he was determined to get a beautiful wife; as for official post, he was determined to rise to high rank; as for means of living, he had good lands and a large residence, and fat cattle, steeds, vegetables, fruits, chickens, and pigs he owned were all of rare kinds.” 其道似老莊，亦婚亦宦，亦治生產；婚必美妻，宦必顯達，生產必良田廣宅，肥牛駿馬，蔬

³⁰ The year can be inferred from Jia Fuxi’s poem “Entering the Gate of the Capital Again in the Year of Xinmao” 辛卯復入都門. *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu* 賈島西木皮詞校注 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 1982), p. 223.

³¹ *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, pp. 161-2.

果雞豚之屬，俱非常種。³² Kong Shangren cites Jia's striking speech to show his unabashed celebration of profit and power, a standpoint that must be offensive to a Confucian observer. "I love profit, and I can make profit. I don't steal; those who steal are thieves. I love power, and I use it directly. I don't pretend to be modest and don't take advantage of connections with influential people. Those who pretend to be modest are the same as prostitutes. Those who take advantage of connections with influential people are the same as dogs." 吾好利，能自生之；不奪竊，奪竊，盜也。吾好勢，吾竟使之，不謬為謙恭，不仗人。謬為謙恭，娼也；仗人，犬也。³³ Here Jia Fuxi's belief in the pursuit of profit and power displays his characteristic cynicism when it comes to human nature. This belief can be said to be the foundation of Jia's value system, dominating the way he presents himself to the world and constituting the basic logic of his view of Chinese history as represented in his drum ballads (I will discuss his view of history in detail later). Confucian scholars of high moral ground would not hesitate to dispute a world centered on profit and power. By contrast, what is wrong, Jia argues, is not the pursuit of profit and power, but the dependence on connections to pursue them and the hypocritical denial of them while pursuing them. Jia's cynicism is directed toward himself as well as the world. He confesses to taking part in a world driven by self-interest, and through honest acknowledgement of his own weakness he seems to win dignity and legitimacy for it. It is this honest acknowledgement of human weakness that makes Kong Shangren categorize him as a follower of Taoists. Underlying this acknowledgement is the Taoist ideal of authenticity; ever since the late Ming being authentic to one's nature had in some sense meant accepting its undesirable or offensive part. Jia Fuxi's inheritance of late-Ming style authenticity runs deep in his social engagement, as can be seen from the next anecdote in his biography. Jia Fuxi once entertained young Kong Shangren with

³² Ibid., p. 161.

³³ Ibid., p. 161.

delicacies and frankly told the latter his purpose of doing so, “The reason why I don’t begrudge fish and meat and feed you with them is because you are smart and different from ordinary children. I’m old and one day may need you. I’m treating you cordially not because I care that you are my old friend’s son.” 不惜魚肉啖汝者，為汝慧異凡兒，吾老矣，或有須汝處，非念汝故人子也。 Jia Fuxi then pointed at a person at the corner who was clearing dirt, saying, “He is also my old friend’s son. He has the nature of a servant, and I simply treat him as a servant.” 此亦故人子也，彼奴才，吾直奴之矣。³⁴ In this anecdote Jia Fuxi expresses his appreciation of Kong Shangren’s talents, but more importantly he emphasizes his wise investment on talents. Underlying Jia’s exposure of his own selfish motive is a proud declaration of authenticity, which is in turn associated with an exhibition of “I have my own way.” The above declaration is followed by another speech that further highlights Jia Fuxi’s passionate embrace of eccentricity, presenting a self-proclaimed authentic person’s playful defiance of social expectation. He said to Kong Shangren, “The green bamboos behind the drawing room of your house are lovely. Is the red-billed parrot hung on the bamboos all right? I longed for it in my dreams. Your father often invited me to your house, but I never long for that (his hospitality).” 汝家客廳后，綠竹可愛，所掛紅嘴鸚鵡無恙否？吾夢寐憶之，汝父好請我，我不憶也。³⁵ Chinese Confucian society is founded on five ethical relationships, between ruler and minister, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brother, and friends. There are rules that regulate each ethical relationship. Around these relationships develop connections and manipulations of connections that Jia Fuxi has already repudiated. Here his repudiation of the ethical bonds of friendship and his elevation of a parrot over a hospitable friend characterize his attitude to all five Confucian ethical relationships. Jia’s speeches suggest an alternative way of developing social relationships, an unconventional

³⁴ Ibid., p. 162.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 162.

society founded on self-interest and personal taste rather than Confucian regulations of human behavior. Personal taste could be the pursuit of either profit or the objects of desire; it could originate either from the most sophisticated calculation such as the prediction of the potential benefit of human kindness or from the most innocent, or even childlike, preference such as the longing for a parrot. On the surface the sophisticated calculation of the adult world and the innocent preference of a child seem contradictory, with one driven by self-interest and the other coming from nature, but actually they are united under the ideal of authenticity. Being honest to one's nature and authentically presenting it means to listen to and satisfy personal taste and desire. Except from the above quotes, Kong Shangren makes other vivid vignettes of Jia Fuxi's defiance of social custom for the sake of satisfying personal taste: he took advantage of an official trip to punish the county commander who once coerced him to serve in the Qing government; after the second withdrawal from officialdom he still wore official attire, condescending to see his country folks; he refused to pay revenue unless the revenue official was willing to humbly bow to him. Jia Fuxi proclaims the pursuit of profit and power, but these vignettes portray a person who is most distant from self-interest driven conduct. However, the two seemingly incongruous sides coexist under the ideal of authenticity.

The coalition of the incongruous sides in Jia Fuxi's personality not only reflects the ideal of authenticity, but also points to the interweaving of two late Ming intellectual and social trends. First, what is detectable in Jia Fuxi's speeches and behavior is the echo of Li Zhi's 李贽 (1527-1602) celebration of the childlike mind-and-heart, the symbol of natural innocence and spontaneity, which descends from Wang Yangming's 王陽明 (1472-1529) teaching that the manifestation of the inherent virtue comes through the direct, uninhibited expression of "innate knowing" 良知. Kong Shangren's view that Jia Fuxi's writing cannot be categorized as either

serious or humorous echoes similar judgments voiced by iconoclastic late Ming literati, such as Li Zhi, Xu Wei 徐渭 (1521-1593), and Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568-1610).³⁶ This is further evidence of his ties to the tide of individualistic thought in the late Ming that reached its height with Li Zhi. Second, Jia Fuxi's unabashed embrace of profit and power resonates with the boom of commerce and the rising social status of merchants since the sixteenth century. The fact that large numbers of educated men who were unable to be admitted official post through national examination in the sixteenth century had to make a living by selling knowledge as a commercial good or give up scholar/official career to become merchants contributed to the changing status of commerce in the Confucian society. Merchants, associated with the stigma of greedy pursuit of profit, had long been regarded as the lowest in traditional Confucian categorization of professions, but as merchants became a new social force and knowledge went hand in hand with commerce, the hierarchical distinction between educated men and merchants became less strict.³⁷ Early in the twelfth century, Lu You 陸遊 (1125-1210) regarded commerce as "the occupation of mean fellows of the marketplace" 市井小人之事, warning his children that "the merchant's way of making profit is what our family should be ashamed of" 市道以營利, 吾家之所深恥.³⁸ By contrast, in 1525 Wang Yangming stated in the epitaph of a merchant that "the *shi* (Confucian scholar), peasant, craftsman, and merchant have different occupations but they share the same principle" 四民異業而同道;³⁹ in the epitaph of a merchant, Li Mengyang 李夢陽 (1473-1529)

³⁶ Ibid., p. 162.

³⁷ See Yu Ying-shih's 余英時 discussion of the change of the relationship between the *shi* 士 and the merchant in the 16th and 17th centuries in "Social Changes of the Ming and Qing and Transformations of Culture" 明清變遷時期社會與文化的轉變 and "Interactions of Intellectuals and Merchants and Transformations of Confucianism" 士商互動與儒學轉向, *Yu Ying-shih wenji* 余英時文集, vol. 3, pp. 155-61, 162-212.

³⁸ Lu You, "Remnant Teachings of the Grand Historian" 太史公緒訓, quoted in Ye Sheng's 葉盛 (1420-1474) *Diary of the East of the Water* 水東日記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), vol. 15, p. 157, 151.

³⁹ "Mr. Fang Lin's (Jie'an) Epitaph" 節庵方公墓表, in *Yangming quanshu* 陽明全書, vol. 25.

quoted the merchant's own words that "merchants and Confucian scholars have different skills but they share the same mind-and-heart." 商與士異術而同心.⁴⁰ Since the sixteenth century many educated men had become merchants and incorporated business ethics into their value system, and vice versa. The traditional Confucian statement that "the mind of the superior man is conversant with righteousness; the mind of the mean man is conversant with gain" 君子喻于義, 小人喻于利⁴¹ underwent great transformations in this period. Before this period the Confucian discussions of righteousness vs. gain expressed the idea that righteousness was characteristic of Confucian scholars and gain was characteristic of merchants, whereas since the sixteenth century the discussions had tended to break this dichotomy. Righteousness was no longer a privilege of educated Confucian scholars, nor was gain a marker of petty merchants any more. "(Confucian students) hide their intention of pursuing political promotion so as to fish for fame. In this sense, when they recite the classics, gain is in it. In any matter contrary to the righteousness which they prescribed, or contrary to their principles, he would neither have given nor taken a singly straw."⁴² In this sense, when businessmen make profit, righteousness is in it." 隱于干祿, 藉以沽名, 是誦習之際, 利在其中矣. 非其義也, 非其道也, 一介不以與人, 一介不以取人, 是貨殖之際, 義在其中矣.⁴³ Here, the scholar-official Han Bangqi 韓邦奇 (1479-1556) quoted Mencius' praise of the ancient righteous minister Yiyin 伊尹 to describe the commercial principle of equal exchange. His view is that Confucian scholars could study for the sake of fame and profit whereas merchants could

⁴⁰ Li Mengyang, "Epitaph of late Wang Wenxian of the Ming" 明故王文顯墓誌銘, in *Kongtongji* 空同集, vol. 46, p. 4, *Siku* edition.

⁴¹ *Analects*, 4. 16, James Legge's translation.

⁴² This is a quote of *Mengzi* 9.7, Jiao Xun 焦循 (1703-1760), ed., *Mengzi zhengyi*, 19. 7, p. 653, James Legge's translation, p. 362.

⁴³ Han Bangqi 韓邦奇 (1479-1556), "Epitaph of Imperial Academy Graduate Mr. Zhao of Xihe" 國子生西河趙子墓表, in *Yuanluoji* 苑洛集, vol. 7, p. 4, *Siku* edition.

abide by Confucian principles in their judicious engagement in mercantile activities. In the early Qing context, Confucian scholars engaging in business gained political connotations that did not exist in the sixteenth-century discourse of commerce. The remnant subject Chen Que 陳確 (1604-1677) wrote “On Making Business as Scholars’ Basic Task” 學者以治生為本論 in 1656, prioritizing business over study, as he believed that financial independence is the prerequisite of study. “The way of learning is nothing special. It is nothing but that the owner of a state protects the state, the owner of a family maintains family property, and the *shi* keeps his righteousness ... To serve parents and raise children is one’s responsibility that one should not demand others to take. Therefore the basic task of the *shi* is indeed to thriftily make business. ... Making business is even more urgent than learning.” 學問之道，無他奇異，有國者守其國，有家者守其家，士守其身，如是而已……仰事俯育，決不可責之他人，則勤儉治生洵是學人本事……而治生尤切于讀書。⁴⁴

Reading this speech against the early Qing context can help us understand Chen Que’s emphasis on the character *shou* (to protect). He lists three meanings of this character in compounds, to protect the state, to maintain family property, and to keep integrity. The semantic connections of these compounds imply their moral connections. A Confucian scholar who can keep integrity and devote himself to protecting his state at the moment of crisis must be the one who can maintain family property, because first all three enterprises require the same skill and commitment to perpetuating precious things, be it sovereignty, property, or character. Further, financial independence, the ability of making business and managing property, provides him with the means to be loyal to the state and to keep his integrity. It may not be too far-fetched to speculate that Chen Que’s statement describes the social circumstances of his time, when making business became an alternative way of living for Chinese scholars who kept loyalty to the Ming

⁴⁴ Chen Que ji 陳確集, vol. 5, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979).

by refusing to serve in the Qing government.⁴⁵ Witnessing the humiliated life of Chinese scholars in the early Qing, the other remnant subject Gui Zhuang elevated the merchant over Confucian scholar, persuading his friend and the latter's descendants to be merchants, since "in today's world Confucian scholars are too degraded" 蓋今之世, 士之賤也甚矣.⁴⁶ Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695), who engaged in prolonged resistance against the Manchus in his early years, wrote a chapter on "Finance" 財計 in his systematic critique of Chinese imperial institutions, *Waiting for the Dawn: A Plan for the Prince* 明夷待訪錄, which was finished around 1663. In this chapter, he wrote that "handicraft (industry) is what sage kings desire to develop and commerce finds ways to satisfy their wishes. Handicraft and commerce are both foundations (of a state)." 夫工固聖王之所欲來, 商又使其愿出於途者, 蓋皆本也.⁴⁷ This represents leading early Qing scholars' politically positive views of commerce.⁴⁸ Jia Fuxi's skill of managing property and his celebration of making profit can be understood against the early Qing social context as well as the rise of commerce since the sixteenth century. If there is any difference between his view of making profit and the discourse of commerce by most of the aforementioned thinkers, it is that Jia Fuxi does not justify commerce by attaching Confucian ethical values to it as the latter argued, rather he holds such profound suspicions about these values that he regards Confucian scholars as hypocrites unless they confess to behaving like other social classes. His total denial of Confucian ethical values can be explained in two ways. The first is his inheritance of the

⁴⁵ Zhao Yuan 趙園 has pointed out this, see *Ming Qing zhiji shidafu yanjiu* 明清之際士大夫研究 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999), pp. 342-5.

⁴⁶ "Account of the Passing on Ink Stone Studio" 傳硯齋記, in *Gui Zhuang ji* 歸莊集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1984), vol. 6, p. 360.

⁴⁷ *Waiting for the Dawn: A Plan for the Prince*, p.46.

⁴⁸ As for the Confucian debates of righteousness vs. gain, and the status of commerce in the Ming and Qing society, see Yu Ying-shih's discussion in "Religious Ethics of Late Imperial China and Merchant Spirit" 中國近世宗教倫理與商人精神, in *Yu Ying-shih wenji*, vol. 3, pp. 234-357, especially pp. 291-5.

heretical and iconoclastic thoughts of Li Zhi and other late Ming thinkers who believed that Confucian ethical values suppress natural innocence. The second is his disappointment with many Confucian scholars' betrayal of loyalty during the Ming-Qing transition. There is no extant account of Jia Fuxi's active participation in anti-Manchu endeavor, but from his poetry we can infer his allegiance. We know that he was forced to serve in the Qing government for a short while. The experience is recorded in his poem "Entering the Gate of the Capital Again in the Year of Xinmao (1651)" 辛卯復入都門, in which he hints at inexpressible sorrow. "In my old year I come here again, / the capital is still the same as it was in the past. /... Both my official career and thoughts on my mind / are indistinct and unlimited." 晚年還至此, 猶是舊京華. 生事兼心事, 蒼茫未有涯.⁴⁹ His lament for the Ming Dynasty can also be found in his other poems and his drum ballads, which I will discuss in detail later. No matter what Jia Fuxi's political standpoint was, his head for business allowed him to be independent from politics, and his gesture of embracing the profitable career indicates a free spirit owing to late Ming individualist thoughts and the rise of commerce since the sixteenth century. It is these intellectual, social trends that create literati like Jia Fuxi, who does not hesitate to talk about profit while celebrating natural innocence. In this sense, Kong Shangren's biography of Jia Fuxi captures his soul and further epitomizes a particular mindset characteristic of some early Qing literati.

The other aspect of Jia Fuxi highlighted in the biography is his passion for the drum ballad. The Chinese cliché that "one's writing is the same as one's personality" is fully realized in Jia Fuxi's case, as his drum ballad, like his personality, subverts the Confucian tradition. Merchants had been main consumers of popular literature since the sixteenth century, and their rise inevitably contributed to its popularity. Concomitant with the dissolution of the distinction

⁴⁹ *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 223.

between pursuing knowledge and pursuing profit was the dissolution of the boundary between high genre and low genre. Late Ming literati shifted interest from high genres such as poetry and essay to popular genres such as novel, drama, and prosimetrical literature, and it is in these latter genres that they created the most innovative, influential works. Jia Fuxi inherits this literary trend. He elevates the drum clapper as a “tool of irony and invective” 嬉笑怒罵之具⁵⁰ to unleash his anger in a playful way. The irony and invective of Jia’s drum ballad suggest a subversive gesture toward the Confucian tradition. Kong Shangren writes, “When he (Jia Fuxi) discussed loyalty with officials and filial piety with sons, he cited unofficial histories/stories to prove his points, not deigning to quote the classics and official histories. For emperors, scholars, and ministers in the classics and official histories, he made comments different from those by Confucian scholars. Those who heard his comments were so struck that they regarded him as a freak, but they couldn’t refute his comments.” 凡與臣言忠, 與子言孝, 皆以稗詞證, 不屑引經史。經史中帝王師相, 別有評駁, 與儒生不同。聞者咋舌, 以為怪物, 終無能出一言以折之。⁵¹ Jia Fuxi’s contempt for the authority of the official histories and Confucian classics leads to his retellings of them in drum ballads, which aim to “overturn the table” 翻案,⁵² subverting standard Confucian interpretations of the classics and official histories. Jia Fuxi’s extant drum ballads consist of two topics, Chinese dynastic history and the *Analects*. The main theme of these drum ballads is that the pursuit of profit and power is intrinsic to human nature and thus is the driving force of history. Undoubtedly, this theme is in tandem with the social, intellectual trends that shape Jia Fuxi’s value system and determine his response to the world. According to Kong Shangren, the basic point Jia wants to impart by retelling the *Analects* is that “all the sages and worthies talked about

⁵⁰ “Biography of the Gentleman of Wood Clapper,” in *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 161.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 162.

nothing but profit; they acted for nothing but power; those who talked about profit and acted for power but pretended to be otherwise were small-minded, careful people of the villages” 古今聖賢莫言非利, 莫行非勢, 言利行勢而違心欺世者, 鄉愿也,⁵³ and Jia Fuxi’s irony and invective exactly target these “small-minded, careful people of the villages.” In the *Analects*, Confucius says, “Your small-minded, careful people of the villages are the thieves of virtue” 鄉愿, 德之賊也.⁵⁴ Mencius explains “small-minded, careful people of the villages” as those who “flatter their generation” 媚於世也者. They are “the thieves of virtue” because “they consent with an impure age. Their principles have the semblance of right-heartedness and truth. Their conduct has the semblance of disinterestedness and purity. All men are pleased with them, and they think themselves right, so that it is impossible to proceed with them to the principles of Yao and Shun. ...” 同乎流俗, 合乎污世, 居之似忠信, 行之似廉潔, 眾皆悅之, 自以為是, 而不可與入堯舜之道....⁵⁵ In the Confucian classics hypocrisy and social ingratiation are two markers of “good, careful people of the villages”. Jia Fuxi situates “good careful people of the village” in the social context of his time, when Confucian ethics was under the threat of commercial boom and when few Confucian scholars could live up to Confucian ethics, thus giving a twist to the meaning of “good careful people of the villages”. Here “Good careful people of the villages” are what Jia Fuxi repudiates as those “who pretend to be modest” and “who take advantage of connections with influential people.” In his vocabulary, social ingratiation is embodied in their identification with this commercial trend and their hypocrisy in concealing their greed.

History and Human Nature in Jia Fuxi’s Poetry

⁵³ Ibid., p. 162.

⁵⁴ *Analects* 17. 13. Good, careful people of the villages refer to those who whose actions are no less evil than others but who can please everyone with their actions.

⁵⁵ *Mengzi*, 14.37. James Legge’s translation, pp. 500-01.

Besides “The Biography of the Gentleman of Wood Clapper,” Jia Fuxi’s poetry collection *Poetic Draft of Danpu* 澹圃詩草, which includes 158 poems, can also help us get a glimpse of his personality and his view of history. In quatrains and regulated verses, Jia Fuxi creates the timeless image of the recluse like many Chinese classical poets, but what make him different from his predecessors are his long songs, in which his sarcasm of human nature and history is in accord with Kong Shangren’s description of him in his biography. The following song “Quiet Observation” 靜觀 is an example in this case.

Only after I quietly observe drought and flood, strange wind and hailstone, 靜觀嘆潦風雹異,
do I believe that royal Heaven has great knowledge. 始信皇天有大知。
If Heaven is like an old woman who holds a baby, 若是老嫗抱嬰兒,
everything will rot and the world not exist. 萬物腐爛無天地。
When people expect (to have rain), the Net star⁵⁶ is bright. 黎民望而畢星明,
When people are afraid of cold weather, mole crickets make a sound. 黎民畏寒螻蛄鳴,
Heaven follows the people’s wishes to let weather be warm or cool. 炎涼冷熱從民愿,
Along thousands of miles of mountains and rivers, all the waters are clam. 萬里江山一水平。
Human beings tend to be proud rather than modest; 人情好傲不好謙,
who is willing to withdraw and let others advance? 誰肯縮頭讓一先?
Human beings tend to be lazy rather than hardworking; 人情愛懶不愛勤,
who is willing to stoop to labor? 誰肯佝僂勞骨筋?
When one owns the throne he is able to establish supremacy over others, 大實在握堪凌駕,
and drives the world with the lure of wealth and position. 全憑利祿驅天下,
When ministers are wealthy enough they are equal with rulers. 衣食既足平等交,
Then the distinction between ministers and rulers is annihilated, and their powers are not balanced. 君臣道廢難相亞。
Therefore I (this old man) am good at raising and lowering my voice in storytelling, 所以老夫善頓挫,
like the mother god of lightening and the god of drought descending from the heaven. 電母旱魃從天墮,
The god of rain orders to make pallets with the water of lizards. 雨師勅丸蜥蜴水,
The wind of Shi You⁵⁷ leads the god of ocean to meet the god of rain. 石尤帶領天吳遇。

⁵⁶ The Net star (mansion) is one of the Twenty-eight mansions of the Chinese constellations. It corresponds to Taurus. It is said to be in charge of war and rain. Here it refers to the god of rain.

⁵⁷ In a legend, a certain merchant Mr. You marries a Miss. Shi and then travels far away to make business. Shi grieves and dies from missing her husband. She wishes to become the wind after her death to prevent other merchants from leaving their wives. Therefore the wind of Shi You becomes the name of strong wind. The legend is found in *Jianghu jiwén* 江湖紀聞, quoted in Yi Shizhen’s 伊世珍 *Langhuanji* 瑯嬛記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), *juan zhong*, p. 128

Before sheep and pigs are born, wolves are already born. 既生羊豕已生狼，
 The chicks of birds are afraid of vultures. 雀雛鳥鷂畏鷂張，
 Foxes live in city walls, and mice live in temples of the god of the earth.⁵⁸ 城垣生狐社生鼠，
 Wine cups and food in plates lead to axes.⁵⁹ 盃盤殄生斧戕。
 Longfeng⁶⁰ and Bigan⁶¹ had no intact bodies. 龍逢、比干無完形，
 King Jie, King Zhou, King You, and King Li⁶² had no good reputation. 桀紂幽厲無美名，
 Unknown and unexpected, hard to grasp, 不貳不測難捉摸，
 in this the Yin air and the Yang air interact and everything is born. 此中氤氲而化生。
 Haven't you seen that Xi's son was unworthy and King Shun's son foolish; 君不見喜兒不肖舜兒癡，
 that there were flood in Yao's reign and drought in Tang's reign, and commoners were starved; 堯水
 湯旱民苦饑，
 that Shensheng was filial but died in a burning pot;⁶³ 大孝申生油鐺死，
 that the shadow of the red candle swayed and the side-branch prospered?⁶⁴ 燭影搖紅發二枝。
 Haven't you seen that Yue Fei (1103-1142) was actually killed by twelve urgent orders? 又不見十二
 道金牌殺岳飛，
 Though evil Qin Hui (1091-1155) was good at intrigues, 雖是秦賊識事機，
 it is pitiable that the honest soul of Wumu (Yue Fei's posthumous honorary title) has been grieved for
 a thousand years; 只可惜武穆忠魂千載恨，
 that only in gossips are right and wrong judged. 空有銜譚定是非。
 There is no definite evidence of the cause and consequence of the worthy and the evil. 賢奸因果無確
 據，
 Clinging to my staff I walk stealthily, (listening) to the sound under the moonlight. 扶杖間行月下聲。
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⁵⁸ Mice in temples of the god of the earth refer to mean people who have strong connections, in particular unworthy officials around rulers. See Yan Ying's 晏嬰 (6th century B.C.) remonstrance to Duke Jing 景 of Qi 齊 (held the title 547-489 B.C.), *Yanzi chunqiu* 晏子春秋, "Asking" 問上, item no. 9.

⁵⁹ This may suggest the story that Liu Bang 劉邦 planned to have Xiang Yu 項羽 murdered after a dinner at Hongmen. *Shiji*, vol. 7.

⁶⁰ Guan Longfeng 關龍逢 was an ancient worthy minister of the Xia killed by King Jie 桀 after he made remonstrance to the latter.

⁶¹ Bigan was the uncle of King Zhou 紂 of the Shang, killed by the latter for remonstrance.

⁶² Jie (18th century B.C.) was a king of the Xia 夏; Zhou (11th century B.C.) was a king of the Shang 商; You (8th century B.C.) and Li (9th century B.C.) were kings of the western Zhou 周.

⁶³ Shensheng (7th century B.C.) was the son of Duke Xian 獻公 of Jin 晉 in the Spring and Autumn period. Shensheng was estranged from Duke Xian by his stepmother, and later committed suicide. *Liji* 禮記, "tangong shang" 檀弓上, in *Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義, vol. 6, 182-4.

⁶⁴ In some historical accounts and miscellaneous writings it is said that before the founding emperor of the Song Dynasty, Zhao Kuangyin 趙匡胤 (927-976), died, he had a conversation with his brother, Zhao Guangyi 趙光義 (939-997), and that he was seen having incomprehensible actions under the shadow of the candlelight, implying that he was murdered by Zhao Guangyi, who then usurped the throne. The side-branch refers to Zhang Guangyi and his descendants. See Wenying 文瑩, *Xiangshan yelu xulu* 湘山野錄續錄, Li Tao 李燾, *Xu Zizhitongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編, vol. 17, pp. 195-7, *Siku quanshu* edition.

The central question of this song is what is responsible for injustice and misfortune in the world, but Jia Fuxi is unable (perhaps no one is able) to give a definite answer to this intriguing question. The song begins with his observation of astronomical phenomena and then moves to that of the human world. He believes that “Heaven has great knowledge,” making a contrast between Heaven, which cares for human needs, and the human world, where men are lazy and arrogant, and rulers drive all with the lure of wealth and position. At this moment the answer seems to be clear. The origin of injustice and misfortune is not in Heaven, which cruelly makes righteous, talented people suffer, a theme developed in earlier works,⁶⁵ but in the weaknesses of human nature, which include laziness, arrogance, and greed. Then he uses a series of animal images to describe what we now call the law of the jungle. Sheep and pigs are prey for wolves; fledglings are afraid of predatory vultures; mice live in temples to profit from sacrifices in the same way officials around rulers benefit from the latter’s power. The theme of human greed features in these animal images, resonating with the aforementioned attribution of injustice and misfortune to human nature, but the law of the jungle itself challenges this simple attribution. The underlying, unanswerable question here is why Heaven, the compassionate possessor of the great knowledge, allows the coexistence of the strong and the weak and hence the violence of predation. Next he offers more historical examples to call Heaven into question. Longfeng and Bigan, the ancient worthy ministers, are victims of tyrants; the sage king Shun’s son is foolish; during the reigns of the sage kings Yao and Tang people suffer from flood and drought, etc. Here, skepticism regarding Heaven as the origin of justice and blessing is carried into belief. Jia Fuxi

⁶⁵ *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 208-9.

⁶⁶ For examples, the “Biograph of Bo Yi and Shu Qi” 伯夷叔齊列傳 in *Shiji* and Han Yu’s 韓愈 (768-824) poem “Testing Zhang Ji” 調張籍.

casts his doubt upon Heaven, or in other words, the natural creator, “Unknown and unexpected, hard to grasp, in this the Yin air and the Yang air interact and everything is born.” He is left with the conclusion that the cause of injustice and misfortune is nowhere to be found. Though the cause of human fate is beyond the grasp of human mind, Jia Fuxi tells readers that writing, especially unofficial historical writing that he calls “gossips”, can judge what is right and what is wrong. In an imaginative and highly idiosyncratic section in the middle of this song, he says that his “skill of raising and lowering my voice” 善頓挫, which refers to his historical writing and storytelling, has the same effect as the gods of lightening and rain sending rain to the human world. In this sense, a writer has the same function as Heaven at the beginning of the song, which listens to and satisfies human needs. Thus, beneath the surface of criticizing human nature and questioning Heaven lays Jia Fuxi’s magnification of the power of writing, which recreates justice for the human world.

Heaven is far from the ultimate arbiter of justice, and human beings are left to themselves to decide their fate in the violent, greedy world. These thoughts in “Quiet Observation” express Jia Fuxi’s general view of Chinese history, which can be summarized as “(rulers) drive the world with the lure of wealth and position” 全憑利祿驅天下. We will see this theme in his drum ballad on history in detail later. Here I want to quote two poems by Jia Fuxi to show his view of late Ming history.

“Two Poems on King Lu’s Palace⁶⁷ in the Desolate City” 賦荒城魯殿餘二首

⁶⁷ This is Zhu Yihai’s 朱以海 (1618-1662) palace in Yanzhou 兗州, Shandong province. After his brother, Zhu Yipai’s 朱以派 (?-1642) death due to the invasion of the Manchus, Zhu Yihai was titled King Lu 魯王 by Chongzhen Emperor in 1644 right before the fall of the Ming Dynasty. Zhu Yihai then served in the Southern Ming court and continued anti-Manchu movement in Taiwan until his death. His anti-Manchu actions can be found in Huang Zongxi’s “Overseas Wailing Account” 海外慟哭記, in *Congshu jicheng xubian* 叢書集成續編 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1994).

Golden tiles were burned in one fire, merging with yellow clouds. /Dragon-like men of high principles are lodged in leaves, always like tumbleweeds. /The door of the old temple is slightly open, and the sound of the bell is quiet, /crossing far in the high sky where the shadow of wild geese fades. /In the rabbit park⁶⁸ foxes sleep on soft grasses. /In the phoenix pond⁶⁹ vultures cry on parasol trees. /To the king's children: please don't shed sad tears. /When flowers fall and the snow melts, the creator of the nature will be seen.

金瓦黃雲一火烘，猶龍寄葉總飄蓬。閒開古寺鐘聲靜，遠度高天雁影空。

兔苑狐狸眠細草，鳳池鴟鳥叫梧桐。王孩莫下淒涼淚，花落雪消見化工。

The moon is cold and mist dissipates on the old walls of Lu. /I can't bear to think of the traces of past events one by one. /The bank of the jade pond⁷⁰ grows old, and (the dream of) immortality is gone. /Waves of the small ocean⁷¹ are dry, enclosed in eternal night.⁷² /Wronged ghosts wail and yell, grieving the jade-white dew of autumn.⁷³ /Snails that have experienced the chaos of war invaded the domain of golden dragons.⁷⁴ /If (they) had known that they would be buried in a handful of dust⁷⁵ of the east hill,⁷⁶ /they would not have planted pines and cypresses to make these clumps of grief.

月冷煙銷魯舊墉，那堪逐事想遺蹤。瑤池岸老長生去，少海波濶永夜封。

冤鬼叫號悲玉露，蝸牛歷亂掠金龍。早知抔土東山盡，不種松柏結怨叢。⁷⁷

As a native of Shandong, Jia Fuxi writes these two poems to lament the ruins of the palace of King Lu in his homeland. The vicissitudes of the clan of King Lu during the Ming-Qing transition is recorded in the epitaph on the tomb stone of the last King Lu, Zhu Yihai 朱以海 (1618-1662), which was excavated at Jinmen 金門, Taiwan, in 1959. According to the epitaph,

⁶⁸ The rabbit park, also called Liangyuan 梁園, belonged to King Liangxiao 梁孝王 (184 B.C.-144 B.C.) of the Han Dynasty. In poetry it is used to refer to imperial parks.

⁶⁹ Phoenix pond refers to the pond in the palace.

⁷⁰ The jade pond is where the Queen Mother lives in legends. Here it refers to the pond in the palace.

⁷¹ The small ocean is a metaphor for prince. Here it refers to King Lu.

⁷² Eternal night is a metaphor for the dark underground where it is believed people live after death.

⁷³ This is an allusion to the line "Jade-white dew scars and harms forests of maple trees" 玉露凋傷楓樹林 from Du Fu's 杜甫 (712-770) *Autumn Stirrings* 秋興.

⁷⁴ Here golden dragons may refer to architectural decorations of King Lu's palace.

⁷⁵ A handful of dust refers to the tomb.

⁷⁶ The eastern hill is in Shandong province. In *Mengzi*, 13. 24, Confucius ascended the eastern hill, and Lu appeared to him small 孔子登東山而小魯.

⁷⁷ *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 241.

when the Qing army invaded Yanzhou 兗州 in 1642, where the palace of King Lu was stationed, Zhu Yihai's brother Zhu Yipai 朱以派 (?-1642), who was King Lu then,⁷⁸ committed suicide along with his eldest son, two brothers, and a few female family members, including Zhu Yihai's first wife; Zhu Yihai inherited the title of King Lu in 1644 right before the fall of the Ming capital to Li Zicheng's 李自成 (1606-1645) rebel army; he then joined the Hongguang Emperor Zhu Yousong's 朱由崧 (1607-1646) Southern Ming court, holding out against Qing forces in Zhejiang province, and in this process lost several of his sons to battles; in 1651, he withdrew to Jinmen and collaborated with the Ming loyalist Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624-1662) to continue anti-Manchu movement until his death from illness in 1662.⁷⁹ These two poems, which describe King Lu's palace after the Manchu invasion, form a striking contrast with "Quiet Observation." While the latter is filled with Jia Fuxi's ridicule of human nature, these two poems, which belong to the subgenre of "contemplating the past," express his lyrical mourning over historical ruins, as required by the convention of poetry "contemplating the past." When the quest for justice is left in abeyance, lyricism appears. Rather than asking the cause of the loss or passing on moral judgments, these two poems focus on the images of death. The former palace becomes a dehumanized world, occupied by ominous animals and ghosts. The small ocean, the metaphor for prince, is said to be dry, enclosed in the eternal night of the underground world. The juxtaposition of cynical criticism of Chinese history and lyrical lament for late Ming history in Jia Fuxi's poetry can also be seen in his drum ballad on history.

Jia Fuxi's Drum-Ballad on History through the Ages

⁷⁸ Zhu Yipai was the ten generation of the line of King Lu. *Mingshi*, vol. 101, pp. 1112-3.

⁷⁹ "Epitaph of King Lu the Directorate" 監國魯王墳誌, in National Museum of History 國立歷史博物館, Taipei.

Jia Fuxi's *Drum-Ballad on History through the Ages* 歷代史略鼓詞 is the first Chinese performance text for the drum ballad.⁸⁰ Its format obviously imitates Yang Shen's ballad-narrative. It consists of the opening remarks, preface, main story that narrates Chinese history from legendary antiquity to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and epilogue that narrates the history of the Hongguang Emperor's Southern Ming court (1644-1645).⁸¹ Each part is composed of prose and verse. In the first three parts, the verse section follows two-line basic melody with the variations from seven-syllable lines to seventeen-syllable lines. In the epilogue, the verse section consists of songs to a variety of tunes in addition to heterometric lines found in other parts.

Like Yang Shen, Jia Fuxi regards human beings as puppets. If puppets in Yang Shen's ballad-narrative are controlled by unpredictable fate, Jia Fuxi believes they are controlled by profit and fame, as is said in Wang Yangming's 王陽明 (1472-1529) poem, "Wherever we meet there is a stage, /why bother to have puppets entering the hall at night? /A glimpse of glamour, the urgent sound of the third watch of night, /people are pulled by long threads of fame and profit." 處處相逢是戲場, 何須傀儡夜登堂. 繁華過眼三更促, 名利牽人一線長.⁸² Jia Fuxi expresses this notion in one pithy sentence in the preface of *Drum-Ballad on History through Ages*. "Wealth and official rank are things that most stubbornly ensnare men all over the world." 富貴功名, 最能牢籠世界.⁸³

⁸⁰ Zhao Lingzhi 趙令畤 of the late eleventh century adapted Yuan Zhen's 元稹 (770-831) *Tale of Yingying* 鶯鶯傳 to the drum lyrics 鼓子詞, in which the prose narrative is interspersed with songs. But Jia Fuxi's text has no direct formal relationship with drum lyrics. Zhu Shenglin's 諸聖鄰 *Prosimetrical Narrative of King Qin of the Great Tang* 大唐秦王詞話 is also a performance text for the drum ballad, but Jia Fuxi's text is the first one formally entitled as the drum ballad.

⁸¹ In some editions, the preface is put at the end of the text. Therefore some scholars argue that the main body of the text is lost. I follow the view of the two editors of Jia Fuxi's drum ballads that the order of the sections in these editions is wrong and the text itself is complete. As for different editions of the text, see *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, pp. 19-22.

⁸² "Watching a Puppet Play, Rhyming with a Companion Piece" 觀傀儡次韻.

⁸³ "Preface" 引子, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 12.

Projecting the view that the world is driven by the pursuit of fame and profit to Chinese dynastic history, Jia Fuxi regards it as nothing but a series of the powerful, treacherous side's brutal subjugation of the weak, virtuous side. "The powerful, brutal people always succeed and the weak ones always stand to lose." 總是強梁的得手，軟弱的吃虧；how many treacherous officials are let off lightly in the world of noise and excitement, and how many filial sons and loyal ministers are buried in the underworld? 從來熱鬧場中不知便宜了多少驚羔賊種，那幽囚世界不知埋沒了多少孝子忠臣。⁸⁴ "Look, they refused to stop struggling for fame and profit. /Every one of them was somehow bewitched. /... Some of them were vegetarians and performed many charities, but ended up losing their houses in fire. /Some of them were treacherous and evil, but ended up passing the civil service examination and rising to high ranks. /Some of them were honest, but were beaten and chastised. /Some of them were villains, but snatched cattle and mules of others. /We are never allowed to reason with powerful lords. /Whoever has bigger fists is the big brother." 看他們爭名奪利不肯休歇，一個個象神差鬼使中了魔.....有幾個持齋行善遭天火. 有幾個作賊當鼈中了高科. 有幾個老實實的好人捱打罵，有幾個兇兇的惡棍搶些牛騾. 總然是大老爺面前不容講理，但仗著拳頭大的是哥哥。⁸⁵

Jia Fuxi's narrative of Chinese history is deconstructive in that not only does it not follow Confucian teachings like Yang Shen's ballad-narrative it even challenges Confucian ethics and ridicules the notion of justice. First, he deconstructs the Confucian construction of glorious prehistory, denouncing it as "farfetched and ridiculous" 附會荒唐. The founding figures of Chinese civilization in his narrative are the initiators of evil. "How many things as evil as murder and arson have they done; how many schemes have they made; how many people of later

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 13.

⁸⁵ "Main Story" 正傳, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 84-5.

generations have they led astray?” 干了多少殺人放火沒要緊的營生, 費了多少心機, 教導壞了多少後人.⁸⁶

Look, at the beginning they were already so cruel that they ate raw meat and drank blood. /Suireshi⁸⁷ added sauce and salt to the raw meat and fried (*aojian* also means torture) it. / Youchaoshi⁸⁸ refused to sleep in mountains, /so elms and willow trees suffered and were made into rafters. /Paoxishi⁸⁹ looked strange with a man's head and a snake's body. /He coaxed people to make fish nets and then nothing was left in the river. /It is said from antiquity that “family property declined when a hen crows in the morning (when a woman is in charge),” /but how come Fuxi's sister⁹⁰ presided in the imperial court? / Nüwashi smelted stones to mend the sky in vain. /Now when we raise head we don't see the mended sky. /Old Shennong⁹¹ raised his ox head to taste all herbs, /inventing diseases for hale and healthy children. /When Huangdi conquered Chiyou's insurgence,⁹² /the peaceful world was once again disturbed by disputes. /Spears, knives, and bows were made. /The veterans of war never fought with bare hands. They disliked unsightly fur coats, /creating apparel and hat for rites in addition to pedantic culture. /They carried crowns made of mulberry wood on the head, /never fearing that the pellets (pearls) hanging from crowns would hit their eye sockets. /What is more ridiculous is that they devoted particular care to pedantic etiquette, /sticking up their ass to bow and scrape.

你看起初時茹毛飲血心已狠, /燧人氏潑醬添鹽又加上熬煎。/有巢氏不肯在山窩里睡, /榆柳遭殃滾就了椽。/庖犧氏人首蛇身古而怪, /鼓弄著百姓們結網打淨了灣。/自古道: “牝雞司晨家業敗”。/可怎麼伏羲的妹子坐了金鑾? /女媧氏煉石補天空費了手, /到如今抬頭不見那補釘天! /老神農□著個牛頭嘗百草, /把一些旺相相的孩子提起病源。/皇帝平了蚩尤的亂, /平穩穩的乾坤又起了爭端; /造作下那槍刀和弓箭, /這是慣打仗的祖師不用空拳! /嫌好那毛韃□的皮子不中看, /弄出來古董斯文又制上衣冠, /桑木板頂在腦蓋子上, /全不怕滴溜著泥彈兒打了眼圈! /更可笑古里古董的講禮數, /撇著個屁股唱的什麼喏圓! ⁹³

⁸⁶ “Main Story” 正傳, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 24.

⁸⁷ Suireshi is an ancient king in Chinese legend, who is said to discover how to drill wood to make fire.

⁸⁸ Youchaoshi is said to teach people to live in the nests on trees.

⁸⁹ Paoxishi, also named Fuxi, is one of the ancestors of men in Chinese legend. He is said to teach people fishing and raising livestock.

⁹⁰ The notion can be found in *Shangshu* 尚書. Fuxi's sister is Nüwa. In Chinese legend, Fuxi and Nüwa are the father and mother of humankind. Nüwa is said to make men with mud and smelt five-colored stones to mend the sky. She succeeded Fuxi to be the emperor. These stories can be found in *Huainanzi*, chapter 6.

⁹¹ In Chinese legend, Shennong is said to make herbal medicine.

⁹² Huangdi is one of the three legendary sovereigns. In the Warring States period and Han Dynasty, he was portrayed as a cosmic ruler of the centralized Chinese state. Chiyou was the leader of southern tribes. The battle between Huangdi and Chiyou can be found in Sima Qian's *Shiji*.

⁹³ “Main body”, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 24-5.

Jia Fuxi's ridicule of Confucian rites shows affinity with the equalization of civilization with degeneration in *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*, but unlike the Confucian and Taoist thinkers who idealize the pre-Confucian world, Jia regards it as the origin of violence and cruelty. In Jia's narrative, Huangdi is not an idealized cultural hero as in Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (145 or 135 B.C.-86 B.C.) *Shiji* 史記, where "he looked like a god when he was born; he could speak when he was an infant; his mind was sharp when he was a child; he was sincere and smart when he was a young man; he was intelligent when he was a grown man" 生而神靈, 弱而能言, 幼而徇齊, 長而敦敏, 成而聰明,⁹⁴ but a creator of weapon and war together with his evil opponent Chiyu. Not only does the war between Huangdi and Chiyu initiate violence in the human world, but civilization itself also leads to men's violent invasion of nature. Jia Fuxi ridicules that Suiyanshi's discovery of fire contributes to men's abuse of animals; Youchaoshi's invention of homebuilding and Paoxishi's invention of fishing lead to environmental disasters. Thus the beginning of Chinese civilization becomes the initiation of evil.

Jia Fuxi's view of the legend of abdication in ancient China is also different from Confucian scholars, who idealize it as the best political system. In *Shiji*, Yao is said to realize his son Danzhu's 丹朱 lack of political talents and decide to hand over the throne to capable Shun. "If Yao handed over the throne to Shun, the people would benefit whereas Danzhu would suffer; if he handed over the throne to Danzhu, the people would suffer whereas Danzhu would benefit. Shun said, 'ultimately I shouldn't let the people suffer to benefit one person.' " 授舜, 則天下得其利而丹朱病; 授丹朱, 則天下病而丹朱得其利. 堯曰"終不以天下之病而利一人".⁹⁵ In Jia's narrative,

⁹⁴ *Shiji*, vol. 1, p. 1.

⁹⁵ *Shiji*, vol. 1, p. 30.

however, Yao is more a tradesman than a sage king, and his abdication is not due to his consideration of the well-being of the people but his calculation of the gain and loss of his family.

Yao thought as follows. The crown originally belonged to my brother Emperor Zhi.⁹⁶ I have occupied this exciting stage over seventy, eighty years. Now my hair has turned white and my teeth are falling, but I have enjoyed enough. It's a pity that my eldest son lets me down. He is such a scoundrel that I cannot establish him as the crown prince. If I hand over the crown to a smart one of my eight sons, people would say that "parents favor younger sons" and this will inevitably lead to fights. In addition, after I die, I will be unable to use political power, such merciless creatures as Huandou, Sanmiao, Chongbo, and Gonggong⁹⁷ may take advantage of the situation to fight with us and beat us into total submission. It would be too late to regret when this does happen. I should figure out a best solution. It is said "to give it up is to keep it." It's better to make a worthwhile trade by holding up the crown to others as early as possible. Last time I found two sages, Chaofu and Xuyou.⁹⁸ I sincerely wanted to hand over the crown to them, but they put on airs, one washing his ears and the other leading an ox,⁹⁹ then both vanish without any trace. Now there is a hero of Lishan,¹⁰⁰ who is hardworking and filial. It happens that I have two daughters, E'huang and Nüying, so I should take him in as my son-in-law. After I reach old age, I will hand over the crown to him. If my two daughters marry the emperor, my nine sons will depend on their sisters. In addition, since the descendants of my sons will not be the sons and grandsons of emperors, they won't have the danger of being slaughtered by rivals. It is true that if one cannot hand over the crown to the son, he hands it over to the daughter. It is always that "what is on the mat falls on the bed-stove." On the mat is almost the same as on the bed-stove. Therefore Yao handed the throne to Shun.

堯想：我這寶座原是我帝摯哥哥的，我把這個熱騰騰的場兒，一氣占了七八十年，于今髮白齒落，卻也快活够了！可惜我大兒子不爭氣，混理混賬，立不得東宮。待要於八位皇子中，揀一個聰明伶俐的傳以江山，又道是：天下爹娘向小兒，未免惹的七爭八吵。況且驩兜、三苗、崇伯、共工，這些利害行貨，乘機動起刀兵，弄一個落花流水，我已閉眼去了，有力沒得使，豈不悔之晚矣！尋思一個善全之策：“捨得卻是留得”，不如把這個天下，早早擁撮給別人，作一個不出錢的經紀。前番也找了兩位名賢，一是巢父，一是許由。滿心把天下讓他，他偏拏腔做勢，一個家洗耳牽牛，躲的影兒也沒有。目下又得了個歷山的好漢，吃辛受苦，孝行服人；可

⁹⁶ Yao's brother Zhi inherited the throne but abdicated and handed the crown over to Yao because of Yao's superior talents. Yao became one of the five sage kings of Chinese antiquity. See *Shiji*, vol. 1.

⁹⁷ Huandou was a tribal leader of the time of Yao and Shun; Sanmiao was a tribal kingdom in southern China; Chongbo's (Count of Chong) name was Gun 鯀. Yao commanded him to harness the Yellow River; Gonggong was an official in the reign of Yao, and later exiled to the remote area by Shun. These four people are called "four evils" 四凶. See *Zuozhuan*, "Lord Wen" 18.

⁹⁸ Chaofu and Xuyou were recluses. Chaofu is said to live in a nest on trees. They both declined the throne Yao intended to hand over to them. The story of Chaofu and Xuyou can be found in *Shiji*, vol. 61.

⁹⁹ Refusing to hear of Yao's intention of handing over the throne to him, Xuyou washed his ears. Chaofu happened to pass by with an ox, and he told Xuyou to hide in a remote area to avoid being found by Yao. See Huangfu Mi 皇甫謐 (215-282), *Memoirs of Lofty-minded Recluses* 高士傳, chapter "Xuyou".

¹⁰⁰ This refers to Shun 舜, who once farmed in Lishan, Shandong province.

巧我有娥皇、女英兩個女孩兒，便招贅他為駙馬。我老之後，把天下交付在他手。閨女并班嫁了皇帝，九個兒子靠著姊妹度日，且後代已不是龍子龍孫，也免受刀下之慘。這是：不得把天下給了兒，便把天下給了女，總是“席上掉了炕上”，差也差不多兒。所以麼將天下傳于舜。¹⁰¹

This is a sarcastic rewriting of Yao's monologue in *Shiji*, vividly revealing his mercenary mentality. Yao is hesitant to hand over the throne to his incompetent eldest son, but he fears that handing over the throne to a younger son may lead to political instability, and that the situation may be further exacerbated by the surrounding predatory tribes. He then figures out the principle that “to give it up is to keep it,” and makes a worthwhile bargain with Shun. By marrying his two daughters to Shun, Yao secures the future of his clan. “If one cannot hand over the crown to the son, he hands it over to the daughter.” Thus in Jia Fuxi's narrative, a calculating scheme lies behind the seemingly perfect legend of political disinterestedness.

Jia Fuxi's narrative of the three ancient dynasties, Xia, Shang, and Zhou, also centers on the theme that history is driven by violence and calculation. Zhou's replacement of Shang is not due to Zhou's “accumulated virtue” 積德累仁, but because “King Wu had excellent judgment and efficient strategies, doing a beautiful job of cutting down Zhou of the Shang.” 武王的眼色高強，手段老辣，把商紂殺的漂亮。¹⁰² “The army of the Zhou bore down on the Shang with the weight of Mount Tai, /killing everyone who helped Zhou to victimize his subjects. /The army kept on killing them until pestles floating in blood blocked the city gate. /Only thus do we know that this is the one to be hailed as long-living sovereign, who sympathized with the sufferings of the people and crusaded against the criminals, who was the best king, and the fortune of his kingdom will last long! /Look, he made a clean break with the Shang, and the difference between the ruler and the minister was done. /Only then could he sit tight on the throne without having to move.”

¹⁰¹ “Main body”, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p.31-2.

¹⁰² “Main body”, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 43.

給了他個“泰山壓頂”沒有躲閃，/把那助紂為虐的殺個淨，/直殺的血流漂杵堵了城門，/這才是吊民伐罪萬歲主，國運靈長第一君！/眼見他一刀兩斷君臣定，/他可才穩坐在龍床不用動身。¹⁰³ That the Zhou army killed the people of the Shang until pestles floated in blood is recorded in *Book of Documents* 尚書¹⁰⁴. Mencius believes such violence is not credible for King Wu. “When the most benevolent was engaged against him who was the most the opposite, how could the blood of the people have flowed till it floated the pestles of the mortars?” 以至仁伐至不仁，而何其血之流杵也？¹⁰⁵ Jia’s tongue-in-cheek praise of King Wu emphasizes the violence and cruelty of his conquest of the Shang, however righteous it is in the Confucian discourse. This is followed by his sarcasm of all the successful rulers in Chinese history, who succeed only because they are more cruel and treacherous than their enemies. “Look, Jie of the Xia did not kill Tang at the Xia Terrace, but after Tang escaped, he expelled Jie to Dingtao and imprisoned Jie in Nanchao until Jie’s death.¹⁰⁶ Zhou of the Shang didn’t kill Xibo (King Wen of the Zhou) in Youli, but ended up dying with his head severed from his body.¹⁰⁷... Indeed, however many regrets from the past to the present we have seen, they are not all. It’s impossible for me to tell all the stories of heroes, every one of whom has heart darker than night.” 你看：夏桀不殺成湯於夏臺，成湯脫身卻把夏桀趕到定陶縣，囚死南巢。商紂不殺西伯於羑里，今日卻落了個“身首異處”！.....真是看不遍古往今來的後悔！俺也說不盡那英雄豪傑，一個家那昏天黑地的心腸！¹⁰⁸ If so-called “heroes” are

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ *Shangshu*, “Wucheng” 武成.

¹⁰⁵ *Mengzi*, 14.3, James Legge’s translation.

¹⁰⁶ Jie was the last ruler of the Xia, and Tang was the founder of the Shang. Jie once imprisoned Tang at the Xia Terrace, in modern Henan province, and then released. Tang collected other vassals to defeat the Xia and replace it with the Shang. Jie said that he regretted not killing Tang at the Xia Terrace. See *Shiji*, vol. 2.

¹⁰⁷ King Zhou of the Shang imprisoned Xibo (King Wen of the Zhou) in Youli, but released him later. See *Shiji*, vol. 3.

¹⁰⁸ “Main body”, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 43-4.

ruthless, their cruelty is encouraged by the common people they govern. In a dramatic narration of the people of the Shang after the Zhou conquest, Jia portrays the Shang people's immediate betrayal of their former ruler.

They all said, "This fatuous and self-indulgent monarch deserves to die!" /They venerably celebrated the "accession of the new king (King Wu of Zhou) to the throne," /completely forgetting that the life of the former ruler whose dynasty had ruled six hundred years should be spared. /They all said, "The new emperor's treatment of the old one is indeed pleasing." /This one said, "These stupid, starving men, who told you to hold the reins of King Wu's horse?"¹⁰⁹ /That one said, "The loyal minister who sacrificed his life, who asked you to have your heart cut out?"¹¹⁰ /This one said, "Look, what a heroic manner this white-beard general has!"¹¹¹ /That one said, "How filial King Wu is! He is even carrying the memorial tablet of his father."¹¹² /The streets were full of people who took their children to receive millet at Juqiao.¹¹³ /Palace ladies and beautiful women of harem all fled with imperial bodyguards.

都說是：“無道昏君，他活該死！”/把一個“新殿龍爺”稱又尊，/全不念六百年的故主該饒命，/都說：“這新皇帝的處分快活煞人！”/這個說：“沒眼色的餓莩，你叩的什麼馬？”/那個說：“乾捨命的忠臣，你剖的什麼心？”/這個說：“你看這白鬍子元帥好不氣概！”/那個說：“有孝行的君王，還載著個木父親！”/滿街上拖男領女去關巨橋的粟，/後宮里的秀女佳人都跟了虎賁。

The Shang people's curse of the former ruler King Zhou, their celebration of the new ruler, and their ridicule of the loyal ministers of the Shang all remind readers of the historical context of the Manchu conquest of the Ming dynasty. Jia Fuxi's portrayals of the Shang people's inconsistency

¹⁰⁹ Boyi and Shuqi drew the reins of King Wu's horse to remonstrate him from attacking King Zhou of Shang. After King Wu conquered the Shang dynasty, they fled to the remote mountain. They would rather starve than eat anything grown on the land of the Zhou. See *Shiji*, vol. 61.

¹¹⁰ Bigan (12th century B.C.) was King Zhou's minister. He was killed by King Zhou for his remonstrance. See *Shiji*, vol. 3.

¹¹¹ This refers to Jiang Ziya 姜子牙, who assisted King Wu to conquer the Shang.

¹¹² King Wu carried the memorial tablet of his father to encourage his soldiers.

¹¹³ Juqiao, in modern Hebei province, is the place where the granaries of the Shang are located. King Wu sent the food in the granaries of the Shang to the people after he conquered the Shang. See *Shiji*, vol. 32.

and the tragic fate of the loyalists mirror the surrender of many Han official-scholars to the Qing and the isolation of loyalists during the Ming-Qing transition.¹¹⁴

Jia Fuxi's historical narrative of the Zhou dynasty to the Ming dynasty follows the same logic. He summarizes the vicissitudes of all the dynasties in a nutshell, "since the three dynasties (Xia, Shang, and Zhou), have we ever seen any dynasty that won the world through violence have a good end? This is because the way of Heaven moves in cycles, and as a matter of course one gets paid with what he deserves." 自從三代以後, 哪裡見強取來的天下, 到後來有個善終的? 這也是天理循環, 自然而然的報應.¹¹⁵ He also explains the Chongzhen Emperor's (r.1628-1644) suicide by the same principle. "Isn't it because his brutal ancestors lacked good deeds to their credit in the nether world—that their imperial sons and grandsons deserved to be tortured?" 莫不是他強梁的老祖陰騭少, 活該在龍子龍孫受折磨? The principle that each dynasty ends badly as a result of its violent beginning serves a twofold function. It condemns the foundational crime of each dynasty, and rationalizes the tragic fate of the last emperor of the Ming dynasty.

Fate is constructed in retrospection. When the dust settles, it seems that everything that happens before is predestined as if by the mandate of Heaven. In *Drum Ballad on History through Ages*, Jia Fuxi occasionally talks about the mandate of Heaven, attributing the cause of fate to Heaven as in the above examples, but in more places he believes that men are responsible for their own fate. "It is said that the life of men depends on the mandate of Heaven. If it is the case, the life of men is predestined. However, as far as I can see, it is the result of the action of men. 雖曰人事實憑天命, 如此說, 則是由命不由人. 然而, 據我看來, 到底是由人不由命. "It is impossible to grasp heavenly justice in midair. Even karma in the next life cannot be ascertained

¹¹⁴ See Huang Zongxi's discussions in the first chapter.

¹¹⁵ "Main body", *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 62.

anywhere.” 半空中的天理原沒處捉摸，就是來世的因果也無處對照。 “The blue sky is overhead, but has it ever opened its eyes since antiquity?” 雖然頭上有青天，自古何曾睜眼？¹¹⁶ He ridicules the manifestations of heavenly justice in well-known stories that have become ingrained in Chinese consciousness. “In the cases when loyal ministers were wronged, they had already been killed by mistake, but why did (Heaven send) frost in June to destroy the tender shoots of the world? Those who had been wronged had no place to ask for heavenly justice, but why hadn’t it rained for three years to let good people starve to death? What exactly would this benefit loyal ministers and virtuous women?” 忠臣抱痛，已是錯殺了好人，可為什麼又六月飛霜，打傷了天下的嫩禾苗？你想那含冤的已是沒處去問天理，可為什麼又三年不雨，餓死了四海的好百姓，究于忠臣孝婦何益之有哉？¹¹⁷ Han dynasty scholar Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179-104 B.C.) formulated the principle of interactions between heavenly and human realms, which provided Confucian restrictions on the power of emperors. Dong argued that when abnormal natural phenomena occurred, the reigning emperor was obliged to criticize his lack of virtue. This belief in the correspondence between Heaven and earthly events adds moral connotations to natural phenomena. It especially appeals to the powerless by promising them heavenly justice when justice is nowhere to be found on the earth. Innumerable Chinese writers allude to the principle of interactions between Heaven and mankind in poetry, drama, and fiction, making it an essential part of Chinese consciousness. It is said that when the minister Zou Yan 鄒衍 (3rd century B.C.) of the Warring States period was unjustly slandered and imprisoned, his cry moved Heaven and the latter sent down frost in summer for his sake.¹¹⁸ The story of the filial woman of Donghai 東

¹¹⁶ “Main body”, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 39-40; “Main body”, p. 14; “Epilogue”, p. 92.

¹¹⁷ “Main body”, p. 13-14.

¹¹⁸ Fan Ye’s 范曄 (398-445) quote of *Huainanzi* in *History of the Latter Han* 後漢書, vol. 57, p. 1856.

海孝婦 has been popular since the Han dynasty.¹¹⁹ It is said that she was wronged to kill her mother-in-law and sentenced to death. Before she died, she begged Heaven to stop raining for three years as a proof of her innocence, and her prayer was fulfilled. These two stories are repeatedly alluded to in literary works. For example, Yuan dynasty dramatist Guan Hanqing's 關漢卿 (ca. 1220-1300) famous drama *Injustice Done to Dou E* 竇娥冤 is based on the story of the filial woman of Donghai. In *Jade Forest for Young Learners* 幼學瓊林, a primer of the Ming Dynasty, the two allusions are juxtaposed in the section of astronomy. The arrangement guarantees that the belief in morally conscious Heaven finds its way deep into the mind of any educated man. Jia Fuxi's drum ballad deconstructs this belief as well as the Confucian moral system behind it. His ridicule of heavenly justice comes from simple, rational observations that not only do abnormal natural phenomena fail to right injustices, they also harm other innocent people. We have seen in Jia Fuxi's song "Quiet Observation" his doubt that Heaven is the origin of justice. Here again, his standpoint shifts back and forth between the belief in predestined fate and the repudiation of morally conscious Heaven. Like the logic in "Quiet Observation," since Heaven is not the arbiter of justice, it is the writer's responsibility to pass on moral judgments. In Jia Fuxi's own words, his *Drum Ballad on History through Ages* uses "hidden judgments to support the powerless and suppress the powerful" 皮裡春秋, 扶弱抑強.¹²⁰

Unlike Yang Shen's ballad-narrative that lists the complete genealogy of each dynasty, Jia Fuxi's narrative only selects historical accounts that are compatible with his view of human nature and history. In his view, human beings are driven by the greedy pursuit of profit and power and rulers who control the development of Chinese history are especially so; in order to

¹¹⁹ It is mentioned in *History of the Latter Han*, vol. 48, P. 647 and Gan Bao's (d. 336) *In Search of the Supernatural* 搜神記, vol. 11, p. 43.

¹²⁰ "Main body," p. 16.

achieve profit and power, rulers initiate and perpetuate war and violence; Heaven cannot redeem evil in the human world. The issue here is not whether Jia Fuxi's conception of Chinese history reflects historical facts, but what historical contexts contributed to his conception. In his drum ballad, sovereignty is like merchandise transmitted from one hand to the other, rulers are like merchants fighting or calculating for profit, and justice means fair trade, in the end one (each dynasty) getting what he pays at the beginning. It is not surprising to see the mentality of commerce in Jia's drum ballad, given his unabashed celebration of profit and power as we have seen in his biography. As noted above, Jia Fuxi's celebration of the pursuit of profit and power epitomizes intellectual and social trends since the sixteenth century. Here again it is the same trends that determine his particular conception of Chinese history. "The world is noisy, and everyone comes for profit. The world is full of activity, and everyone goes for profit." 天下熙熙, 皆為利來, 天下攘攘, 皆為利往.¹²¹ Sima Qian's pithy phrase from the "Accounts of Merchants" 貨殖列傳 can be borrowed to describe Jia Fuxi's view of human nature and history. The commercial vocabulary provides a medium to interpret other social activities of Jia Fuxi's time, including war and dynastic succession. The interesting point here is while he claims to embrace the pursuit of profit and power he condemns the same principle when it is applied to rulers who control the development of history. The principle that profit and power deserves unabashed pursuit is a double-edged sword. When an individual embraces it as in Jia Fuxi's case, he can be said to express authenticity and bravely confront the weakness of human nature. But when a ruler makes it the driving force behind history, the consequence is disastrous; at least it is so from the view of Jia Fuxi's ballad-narrative of Chinese history. Jia Fuxi's criticism of the mercenary mentality is echoed by other thinkers of the same period. Huang Zongxi is the most prominent

¹²¹ *Shiji*, vol. 129 "Accounts of Merchants," p. 3256.

one of them. In the chapter “On the Prince” 原君 from his treatise *Waiting for the Dawn: A Plan for the Prince*, Huang Zongxi criticizes rulers who treat the country as their own property. “He looked upon the world as an enormous estate to be handed on down to his descendants, for their perpetual pleasure and wellbeing.”¹²² 視天下為莫大之產業，傳之子孫，受享無窮。 Like Jia Fuxi, Huang Zongxi acknowledges one’s right of satisfying self-interests. “In the beginning of human life each man lived for himself and looked to his own interests.” 有生之初，人各自私也，人各自利也。 Huang Zongxi imagines the ancient sage kings as those who take public interests above self-interests, and criticizes later rulers’ sacrificing public interests to satisfy self-interests. “However, with those who later became princes it was different. They believed that since they held the power over benefit and harm, there was nothing wrong in taking for themselves all the benefits and imposing on others all the harm.” 後之為君者不然，以為天下利害之權皆出於我，我以天下之利盡歸於己，以天下之害盡歸於人，亦無不可。 Huang Zongxi thinks that the problem is not that man acts for self-interests but that the ruler expands his self-interests to the degree of eliminating his subjects’ self-interests. “They made it so that no man dared to live for himself or look to his own interests. Thus the prince’s great self-interest took the place of the common good of all-under-Heaven.” 使天下之人，不敢自私，不敢自利，以我之大私為天下之公。 Cogent as Huang Zongxi’s discussion is, he faces the same dilemma as Jia Fuxi does. The first issue is if man’s pursuit of self-interest is justified, the ruler, who shares the same human nature as his subjects, can also justify his pursuit of self-interest. The second issue is how to decide if man’s pursuit of self-interests is kept within reasonable bounds. Without resolving these two issues, the double standard applied to the common man and the ruler, and the vague boundary of self-interests, Huang Zongxi’s conception of ideal politics has no choice but to appeal to the sage kings who

¹²² Translation is from *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, volume 2, p. 6.

can transcend the weakness of human nature. Both Jia Fuxi and Huang Zongxi acknowledge the legitimate status of self-interest, reflecting the influence of commercial trends of their time, but the acceptance of self-interest is in conflict with their idea that politics should be governed by selfless motives. In this sense, their criticism exactly targets the intellectual and social trends that have nurtured them.

Actually Jia Fuxi's value system has a twofold contradiction. First, he occasionally appeals to Heaven to redress injustice, but in other places his challenge of the Confucian construction of the interactions between Heaven and humankind makes him view Heaven with suspicion. Second, he celebrates man's pursuit of self-interest, but on the other hand condemns history that is driven by the same pursuit of rulers. The contradictions of his value system make it impossible to offer decisive moral judgments. Therefore, at the end of the main body of his drum ballad his previous claim of "supporting the powerless and suppressing the powerful" yields to the rhetoric of theater, echoing the idea of the puppet theater in the preface of his drum ballad.

Life needs nothing but laughter. /How is it possible to judge high and low in the human world?
/My talk that finds faults from the past to the present /is nothing but singing crazy songs for
amusement when the occasion rises.

人生只要笑呵呵, 世間那得論平陂? 象俺這挑今翻古的一席話, 不過是逢場作戲, 發些狂歌。¹²³

In Jia's view, history as a theater has several meanings. History is a theater because historical figures are actors, as Jia Fuxi writes at the beginning of *Drum Ballad on History through Ages*, "I simply use a broken drum and two clappers. I will not get off the stage before I let *Sheng* and *Dan* (male and female leading roles in Chinese traditional theater) sing all the songs." 但憑著一塊破鼓兩頁板, 不叫他唱遍生旦不下臺。¹²⁴ History is a theater also because Jia Fuxi narrates it in a

¹²³ "Main body," p. 84.

¹²⁴ "Main body," p. 24.

way of irony and invective that subverts the Confucian construction of Chinese dynastic history. Here at the end of the main body of his drum ballad, the rhetoric of theater coincides with the impossibility of judging right from wrong. Regarding history as a theater detaches history from moral urgency. Theatrical playfulness dispels moral anxiety. If history could be a theater, his professed ideological standpoint and his morally based criticism of history can also be read as “crazy songs for amusement.” The rhetoric of theater seems to dissolve the contradictions in Jia’s value system, but it can never completely dispel the dilemma already presented.

Epilogue of *Drum-Ballad on History Through Ages*

Just as Jia Fuxi writes poems of Chinese history and poems of the Southern Ming court in two different styles, the first three parts of his drum ballad of Chinese history make a contrast to the epilogue. The first three parts on Chinese history from antiquity to the Ming dynasty are written in low-register language. His use of ribald humor not only satirizes violence, hypocrisy, and injustice in Chinese history, but also echoes his view of history as a theater by adding cynical playfulness to the otherwise serious topic. In the epilogue of the history of the Southern Ming court, however, his language, though still colloquial, is more elegant. As Jia Fuxi himself comments on his style, he “insists on weaving elegant words with vulgar words.” 言谈偏要雅兼村.¹²⁵ His purpose of juxtaposing low and high registers is to make a contrast between his sarcasm of Chinese history and his lament for the Southern Ming court. The epilogue includes seven songs entitled “Lament for the Southland” 哀江南, sung to the singing style of Yiyang 弋陽. Originating in Jiangxi, the tune-pattern of Yiyang is characteristic for high-pitched, sonorous

¹²⁵ “Epilogue,” p 96.

singing, and suitable for expressing “melancholy and vehemence” 悲涼慷慨。¹²⁶ The southland in these songs refers to Jinling (modern Nanjing), where the Southern Ming court located. The seven songs consist of the introduction, six laments for the historical sites of Jinling, and the summary. They portray the desolate state of Jinling in the late 1640s. For example, the fifth song creates the air of nostalgia in terms of a series of images and is finally fixed on a willow tree.

Tune to “Buying Delicious Wine” 沽美酒, “Lament for the Long Bridge” 吊長橋

Do you remember the bridge that crosses the blue crook for half a mile? A stripe of the old, red wood submerged in the water. The autumn water, the long sky, few pass the crook. Cold and desolate twilight, only a bent willow is left.

你記得跨青谿半里橋？舊紅板沒一條。秋水長天人過少，冷清清的落照，剩一樹柳彎腰。¹²⁷

The willow tree alludes to a famous anecdote of the Eastern Jin (317-420) general Huan Wen 桓溫 (312-373) in *A New Account of the Tales of the World* 世說新語. In a military expedition, Huan Wen came across the willow trees he planted many years ago. Seeing that they had grown into big trees, he lamented, “The trees (I planted) are like such. How can I endure (the passage of time)?” 樹猶如此，人何以堪。¹²⁸ The image of the bent willow at the end of the song thus epitomizes sadness of loss. The last song “General Lament for Jinling” 總吊金陵 is the most known of the seven songs. It concludes previous laments.

I once saw orioles singing at dawn in the jade palace of Jinling, and blossoms blooming early at the water pavilion on the Qinhuai River. How could I know that they would easily melt away like ice? I witnessed the vermilion towers being built, guests being entertained, and now the towers fallen. On the piles of emerald tiles and green mosses, I once fell in romantic dreams, and have seen the vicissitudes of the past fifty years. The lane of Black Robes no longer belongs to the Wang family; at Mochou Lake ghosts cry at night; at Phoenix Terrace owls roost. The destroyed mountains are the most real in my dreams. The old landscape cannot be forgotten even though I want to get rid of it. I can’t believe that the state map has changed [i.e. the state has a new ruler] / Suddenly the state map has changed. Let me randomly

¹²⁶ “Epilogue,” Ibid., p. 92.

¹²⁷ “Epilogue,” *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 93.

¹²⁸ *A New Account of the Tales of the World* 世說新語, 2.55.

make a song of lament for the southland /Let me sing a song of lament for the southland, and in my sad voice sing it until I'm old.

俺曾見金陵玉殿鶯啼曉，秦淮水榭花開早，誰知道容易冰消。眼看他起朱樓，眼看他宴賓客，眼看他樓塌了。這青苔碧瓦堆，俺曾睡風流覺，將五十年興亡看飽。那烏衣巷不姓王，莫愁湖鬼夜哭，鳳凰台棲梟鳥。殘山夢最真，舊境丟難掉，不信這興圖換稿/一霎時興圖換稿。謾一套哀江南/唱一套哀江南，放悲聲唱到老。¹²⁹

Though the seven songs express nostalgia, Jia Fuxi continues the rhetoric of theater, denying any attempt of making moral judgments. Here lyrical nostalgia goes hand in hand with the rhetoric of theater.

The rise and fall from the past to the present are like mist and clouds passing in a flash. How sad and wretched they are! But when I sing it now, it is an entertainment in the peaceful time. We don't have to worry for the ancients.

正是古今興亡，煙雲過眼，好不悲涼感慨的緊！然而如今唱來，卻是際太平而取樂，不必替往古以擔憂。¹³⁰

Given the censorship of the early Qing court, Jia Fuxi's claim of "entertainment in the peaceful time" can be taken as self-protection. However, it is also a logical continuance of the theatrical framework of his storytelling. The absence of moral judgments that results from the difficulty of locating the cause of evil and the double-edged principle of pursuing self-interest contributes to lyrical nostalgia in these songs, the beauty of which lies in the dissolution of the dichotomy of good and evil.

The seven songs enjoy higher visibility than the rest of Jia Fuxi's *Drum Ballad on History through Ages*, because Kong Shangren includes them in the sequel to scene 40 of his historical drama, *The Peach Blossom Fan* 桃花扇, in which they are attributed to Kunqu master Su

¹²⁹ *The Peach Blossom Fan*, 4. 260; *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 94. The song in *The Peach Blossom Fan* is basically the same as the original one, with only four characters altered. Before "r" are characters used in *The Peach Blossom Fan*, and after "r" are characters used in the original one.

¹³⁰ "Epilogue", *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 92.

Kunsheng 蘇昆生 (17th century).¹³¹ The sequel centers on the nostalgia of Su Kunsheng and Liu Jingting 柳敬亭 (1587-ca.1670), one of the most famous storytellers of the seventeenth century. In *The Peach Blossom Fan* they turn into a woodcutter and a fisherman respectively to avoid serving in the Qing court after the fall of the Southern Ming court. In the sequel their conversations of the past elaborate on the trope of the fisherman and the woodcutter as critics of history. Like the fisherman and the woodcutter in Yang Shen's ballad-narrative, Liu Jingting's ballad-narrative and Su Kunsheng's songs are what "The fisherman and the woodcutter talk about splendor of the past" 漁樵同話舊繁華.¹³²

Besides the seven songs from *Drum Ballad on History through Ages*, Kong Shangren also cites Jia Fuxi's drum ballad of the *Analects* in *The Peach Blossom Fan*, and this time puts it in the mouth of Liu Jingting. The item of the *Analects* in Jia Fuxi's drum ballad describes musicians of the state of Lu leaving for other states due to their dissatisfaction with the decline of rites in Lu. "The grand music master, Zhi, went to Qi. Gan, the master of the band at the second meal, went to Chu. Liao, the band master at the third meal, went to Cai. Que, the band master at the fourth meal, went to Qin. Fangshu, the drum master, withdrew to the north of the river. Wu,

¹³¹ According to Yuan Shishuo 袁世碩, Xu Xudan 徐旭旦 (1656-1720), Kong Shangren's colleague in river management, wrote the song series "Thoughts at the Old Pleasure Quarters" 舊院有感, on which Su Kunsheng's songs are closely based. See Xu Xudan, *Shijing tang shici chao* 世經堂詩詞抄, j. 30. In addition to "Preface to *Peach Blossom Fan*," another song series in scene 23 seems to have been authored by Xu. See Yuan Shishuo, *Kong Shangren nianpu* 孔尚任年譜, pp. 263-70. Recent studies on Xu Xudan show that he plagiarized other writers' works and included them in his own collection. It is very likely that Xu Xudan copied the song series from Kong Shangren instead of the other way around. See Xu Qinjun 徐沁君, Huang Qiang 黃強, "Taohuashan zhong jishan yuyun chu taoqu de zuozhe wenti" 桃花扇中寄扇餘韻出套曲的作者問題, *Yangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 揚州師院學報 (1993, 1), pp. 11-5; Huang Qiang, Shen Lingyan 申玲燕, "Xu Xudan shijingtangchujie chaoxizizuo shukao" 徐旭旦世經堂初集抄襲之作述考, *Wenxue yichan* 文學遺產 (2012, 1), pp. 90-9. If we compare Xu's song series with the songs in *Peach Blossom Fan*, we will find many variants, whereas there are only a few variants between the songs in Jia Fuxi's drum ballad and the songs in *Peach Blossom Fan*. Xu's variants decrease political nostalgia of the songs, making them more like standard romantic songs. All the evidence shows that the songs in *Peach Blossom Fan* have closer connection with Jia's drum ballad than Xu's song series, so I still take Jia as the original writer of these songs.

¹³² *Peach Blossom Fan*, sequel, p. 268.

the master of the hand drum, withdrew to the Han. Yang, the assistant music master, and Xiang, the master of the musical stone, withdrew to an island in the sea.”¹³³ Jia Fuxi uses his characteristic invective to make the exile of Lu musicians into a dramatic performance. The grand music master, Zhi, talks about Lu with contempt before leaving it, “I was so blind that I muddled in slough. /Now I straighten up and leave cleanly.” 往常時瞎了眼睛在泥窩里混, 到如今抖個身子去個清; the band masters, Gan, Liao, and Que, imagine getting rid of the control of Lu, “In future we let them have headache once they hear our names” 從今後叫他聞著俺的風兒腦子疼; the rest of the musicians decide to live in reclusion, “In a small boat we set out for the Peach Blossom Spring. /¹³⁴ Indeed, rivers and lakes fill the earth, a few fishermen.¹³⁵” 俺們一葉扁舟桃源路, 正是江湖滿地, 幾個漁翁.¹³⁶ In *The Peach Blossom Fan*, Liu Jingting’s storytelling of the *Analects* is set in 1643, one year before the fall of the Ming dynasty. He uses the drum ballad to explain his leaving the service of the notorious official Ruan Dacheng 阮大鍼 (1587-1646), who persecuted righteous officials in the court. Liu’s audience, three young literati who worry the decline of the dynasty, praises his drum ballad, “The derision and taunt are elegant and unrestrained. Every sound of the clapper is mild and dignified. Three beats of the drum of Yuyang¹³⁷ are vehement and touching.” 這笑罵風流跌宕, 一聲拍板溫而厲, 三下漁陽慨以慷.¹³⁸

¹³³ *Analects*, 18.9. James Legge’s translation, with revision.

¹³⁴ The Peach Blossom is an idyllic utopia created in Tao Qian’s “Account of the Peach Blossom Spring.”

¹³⁵ This is an allusion to Du Fu’s poem “Autumn Stirrings,” no. 7, “rivers and lakes fill the earth, /and one old man, fishing” 江湖滿地一漁翁.

¹³⁶ *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p.149-50.

¹³⁷ Mi Heng 禰衡 (173-198) made the drum song “Yuyang canzhua” 漁陽參搥 to challenge the warlord Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220). Canzhua is a way of beating drums.

¹³⁸ *The Peach Blossom Fan*, scene 1, p. 9.

Jia Fuxi's drum-ballad adaptation of the classics and history to the social, political context of his own time makes the classics and history a means of criticizing his contemporary society. Taking current circumstances to understand history in a retrospective way and using the past to satirize the present is a trope shared by Chinese storytellers. Insofar as Jia Fuxi and Liu Jingting both use the storytelling to deride society, they can be taken as mirror images of each other. Unlike Jia Fuxi, whose irony and invective invited antagonism,¹³⁹ Liu Jingting's "humor, derision, and taunt" 談諧笑罵¹⁴⁰ won him applause from leading literati of the seventeenth century. Kong Shangren is one of few seventeenth century literati who make vivid vignettes of Jia Fuxi's personality and comment on his storytelling. By contrast, Liu Jingting's personality, life, and virtuosity in storytelling are recorded in many essays, poems, lyrics, and dramas. Large amounts of materials about Liu Jingtang can make up for scanty accounts about Jia Fuxi. There are at least four known biographies of Liu Jingting written by seventeenth century literati.¹⁴¹ Huang Zongxi writes Liu Jingting's storytelling in this way, "Every sound he made was either like ironclad horsemen briskly brandishing knives and swords in the sky, or wind whistling, rain pouring, sad birds crying, and terrified beasts howling. The regret for the demised state immediately rose, and the sound of the sandalwood clapper lost its luster" 每發一聲，使人聞之，

¹³⁹ "Those who laugh and curse others are always laughed and cursed by others. Therefore his neighbors couldn't tolerate him." "Biography of the Gentleman of Wood Clapper," in *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 162; In a preface to Jia's drum ballad, a certain Tiansuizi 天隨子 says that Jia was persecuted by mean, vulgar men, in *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 186.

¹⁴⁰ Mao Xiang's 冒襄 (1611-1693) poem, "To Liu Jingting" 贈柳敬亭, in *Poetry Collection of Chaomin* 巢民詩集.

¹⁴¹ Sophie Volpp points out that biographies of Liu Jingting written by Wu Weiye and Huang Zongxi represent two polarities: Wu delighted in Liu's ability to infiltrate boundaries of status, whereas Huang sought to contain this transgression. Her discussion focuses on the relationship between the storyteller's protean mutability and social impersonation. See *Worldly Stage: Theatricality in Seventeenth-Century China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), chapter six. I agree with Volpp that the literati's depiction of Liu Jingting emphasizes his protean mutability, but my focus is their depiction of Liu Jingting as a symbol of nostalgia.

或如刀劍鐵騎，颯然浮空，或如風號雨泣，鳥悲獸駭，亡國之恨頓生，檀板之聲無色。¹⁴² Because of the “derision and taunt” in their storytelling, seventeenth century literati and later critics often regard Jia Fuxi and Liu Jingting as belonging to “the genealogy of ancient jesters” 古滑稽者流¹⁴³. Like knight-errant and oppressive official, “jester” has become a term to describe a category of people since it appears in the “Accounts of the Jesters” 滑稽列傳 of Sima Qian’s *Shiji*, in which, in addition to real jesters, articulate ministers, who can use playful, eloquent speeches to obliquely admonish rulers, are also called jesters. Wu Weiye’s 吳偉業 (1609-1671) lyric to Liu Jingting to the tune “Spring in the Qin Garden” 沁園春, written around the late 1660s, portrays Liu Jingting as a jester who witnesses the vicissitudes of late Ming history.

What have you accomplished? /At the age of eighty,¹⁴⁴ /you are wandering in the horizon. /As you are talking eloquently and leisurely, /evoking Chunyu Kun 淳于髡¹⁴⁵ and Dongfang Shuo 東方朔.¹⁴⁶ /You clasp hands with new friends and talk delightfully, /like Ju Meng¹⁴⁷ and Caoqiu Sheng.¹⁴⁸ / (You tell the political rivals of) the state of Chu (3rd century B.C.) and the state of Han (3rd century B.C.) with great ease, / (You tell decadent pleasures of the Chen Dynasty and the Sui Dynasty) as plays. /Fantastic stories from your tongue end with a laugh.

¹⁴² “Biography of Liu Jingting” 柳敬亭傳, in *Huang Lizhou wenji* 黃梨洲文集, pp. 86-8.

¹⁴³ Tiansuizi’s preface, *Jia Fuxi mupici jiaozhu*, p. 186.

¹⁴⁴ It’s eighteen in the lyric, but Collection of Jade Flowers 瑤華集 compiled by Jiang Jingqi 蔣景祁 (1646-1695), in which this lyric is included, substitutes eighty for eighteenth. “Eighty” is more likely the correct character.

¹⁴⁵ Chunyu Kun was an articulate diplomat of the State of Qi in the Warring States period. The story of Chunyu Kun can be found in “Accounts of the Jesters” 滑稽列傳 in *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 126.

¹⁴⁶ Dongfang Shuo (B.C.154-B.C.93), style name Manqian, was an articulate courtier of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty. The story of Dongfang Shuo can be found in “Memoirs of the Jesters” in *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 126.

¹⁴⁷ Ju Meng (2nd century B.C.) was a knight-errant of the Han Dynasty. His story can be found in “Memoirs of the Knight-Errant” 遊俠列傳 in *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 124.

¹⁴⁸ Caoqiu Sheng 曹丘生 (2nd century B.C.) was famous for his eloquence. He spread Ji Bu’s 季布 (2nd century B.C.) fame as a knight-errant and thus his name has become the synonym of recommender. Caoqiu Sheng’s story can be found in “Memoirs of Ji Bu and Luan Bu” 季布樂布列傳 in *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 100.

/Who is real, and who is false? /You deride that Confucian scholars deceive the world, /and make the definitive edition of *Spring and Autumn Annals*.¹⁴⁹

How many kings and princes have you seen? /You must remember thousands of pearled shoes (talented retainers)¹⁵⁰ at the banquets in the carved building. /What is lamentable is that the “Floating over the Waves” Grand General,¹⁵¹ who enjoyed songs and dances, ended up being executed at the east of the city. /The soldiers and horses that conquered the south (under his lead),¹⁵² /wailed in Xizhou.¹⁵³ /There is only Jingting, /still the same willow,¹⁵⁴ /after the wind and rain, catkins all over your head. /The things you care... /Please keep a company of young men for a moment, /don’t talk about sorrow for no reason.

客也何為？十八之年，天涯放游。正高談拄頰，淳于曼倩；新知抵掌，劇孟曹丘。楚漢縱橫，陳隋遊戲，舌在荒唐一笑收。誰真假，笑儒生誕世，定本春秋。

眼中幾許王侯，記珠履三千宴畫樓。歎伏波歌舞，淒涼東市；征南士馬，慟哭西州。只有敬亭，依然此柳，雨打風吹絮滿頭。關心處，且追陪少壯，莫話閑愁。¹⁵⁵

The first stanza describes Liu Jingting’s storytelling. Wu Weiye compares him to Chunyu Kun and Dongfang Shuo, two ancient ministers famous for their playful eloquence in the “Accounts of the Jesters,” emphasizing his humor and implying the political connotations of his storytelling. “Political rivals of the state of Chu and the state of Han” and “decadent pleasures of the Chen Dynasty and the Sui Dynasty” not only indicate the historical contents of Liu’s storytelling, but

¹⁴⁹ It is said that Confucius wrote *Spring and Autumn Annals* to pass on his judgments. See *Records of the Grand Historian*, vol. 47. Here Wu Weiye describes Liu’s contempt for Confucian scholars and his pride of retelling history that is written by the latter.

¹⁵⁰ Pearled shoes refer to talented retainers of aristocrats.

¹⁵¹ “Floating over the Waves” Grand General was the title of generals of the Han Dynasty, for example, Ma Yuan 馬援 (14 B.C.-49 A.D.). Ma Yuan achieved great military accomplishments, but he was slandered after death. Here Wu Weiye uses the allusion of Ma Yuan to imply Zuo Liangyu’s 左良玉 (1599-1645) military accomplishments and sad death.

¹⁵² “Conquering the South” Grand General was the title of Yang Hu 羊祜 (221-278) and Du Yu 杜預 (222-285) of the Western Jin Dynasty. Ma Yuan once led the army to conquer Jiaozhi in south China. Zuo Liangyu was titled Marquis of Appeasing the South 甯南侯. According to his biography in *Mingshi*, Zuo Liangyu intended to overturn Hongguang Emperor without success; he died in regret because his insurgence weakened the Southern Ming court and allowed the Manchus to speed the process of crossing the Yangzi River.

¹⁵³ Xizhou is Nanjing. In Xie An’s 謝安 (320-385) biography in *Jinshu* 晉書, it is said that when Xie An died, his nephew Yang Tan 羊曇 walked to the gate of Xizhou and wailed there for Xie. Here Wu Weiye alludes to this story.

¹⁵⁴ Liu Jingting’s original surname is Cao 曹. Once he rested under a willow tree. He shed tears while touch its branches, and decided to change his surname to Liu, which means willow. See Wu Weiye, “Liu Jingting’s Biography” 柳敬亭傳, *Wu Meicun quanji* 吳梅村全集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1990), vol. 52, pp. 1055. Liu Jingting’s crying over a willow follows Huan Wen’s lamentation over a willow, in *A New Account of the Tales of the World* 世說新語, 2.55.

¹⁵⁵ *Wu Meicun quanji*, vol. 22, pp. 580-1.

because of the multiple meanings of *zongheng* (which means political rivals or talking eloquently with great ease) and *youxi* (which means pleasures/games that ruined the two dynasties or treating things playfully), they also describe Liu's skill and his attitude towards the subjects of his storytelling. The second stanza summarizes the ups and downs of Liu Jingting's patron Zuo Liangyu 左良玉 (1599-1645), the high-ranking general of the Southern Ming court whose insurgence precipitated its ruin. The image of the willow tree in Jia Fuxi's "Lament for the Southland" reappears at the end of the lyric, where Liu Jingting metamorphoses into a willow tree as the last witness of the bygone past. The jester himself becomes the symbol of nostalgia.

Both Liu Jingting's eloquent retelling of Chinese history and his playful rendering of it parallel Jia Fuxi's drum-ballad retelling. Liu's contempt for Confucian scholars and his pride of retelling Chinese history originally written by the latter also evoke Jia Fuxi's sarcasm of Confucian scholars. Not only do they view Chinese history as a play, but they also play protean roles, jesters, historians, storytellers, and the fisherman and the woodcutter. If the talk and laughter of the fisherman and the woodcutter lament the temporality of human existence in Yang Shen's ballad-narrative, storytelling of Jia Fuxi and Liu Jingting mixes lyrical lament with irony and invective that subvert the Confucian construction of Chinese history.

Gui Zhuang's *Remnant Sound of Playing the Zhu*

Like Yang Shen and Jia Fuxi, biographical records of Gui Zhuang emphasize his eccentricity. The word that appears repeatedly in the records to describe his personality is "strange" 奇. Gui Zhuang and his close friend Gu Yanwu enjoyed equal fame, with Gui said to be strange and Gu

to be weird 歸奇顧怪.¹⁵⁶ Gui Zhuang's strangeness can be seen in several aspects. He was good at wild grass script, and was often so absorbed in writing calligraphy after drinking wine that he ignored people around him. After the fall of the Ming, he visited famous mountains and rivers to commemorate the past, and shocked onlookers by wailing at these historical sites.¹⁵⁷ If these anecdotes model on the calligrapher Zhang Xu 張旭 (late 8th-early 9th century), who was famous for writing wild script after drinking wine, and the poet Ruan Ji 阮籍 (210-263), who was said to wail when reaching the dead end in his biography, Gui Zhuang's choice of building a cottage next to tombs and the couplets he wrote for the cottage show his eccentricity: "A couple lodge in a happy shelter. The wife is too smart and the husband too weird. Neighbors live in the netherworld. How few are living people, and how numerous the ghosts!" 兩口寄安樂之窩, 妻太聰明夫太怪; 四鄰接幽冥之宅, 人何寥落鬼何多.¹⁵⁸

Gui Zhuang was a staunch Ming loyalist. Living next to tombs was one way of expressing his denial of the new regime. Another way was to change his name into Zuoming 祚明, literally meaning to bless the Ming. In 1645 the magistrate of Gui Zhuang's hometown Kunshan ordered men to change their hairstyle, Gui resisted the order and led the local people to kill the magistrate. Then he shaved his head to become a monk, calling himself Puming Dhuta 普明頭陀, and fled.¹⁵⁹

There is an anecdote about the circulation of Gui Zhuang's *sanqu* lyric *Remnant Sound of Playing the Zhu*. It is said that its fame was so widespread that the Shunzhi Emperor (r. 1644-1661) ordered it to be submitted to the court. Because it contains passages that offended the Qing,

¹⁵⁶ Wang Desen 王德森, "Kunshan mingxian huiang zhuanzan" 崑山明賢畫像傳贊, quoted in *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 577.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 577.

¹⁵⁸ *Gusheng xubian* 觚觔續編, quoted in *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 577.

¹⁵⁹ *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 579.

it was abridged and retitled *Sorrow of Eternity* 萬古愁. The Shunzhi Emperor praised the work and asked it to be performed to accompany his meals.¹⁶⁰ In the original title, *zhu* refers to an ancient stringed instrument, and playing the *zhu* alludes to Gao Jianli 高漸離, the player of the *zhu* in the Warring States Period, who tried to assassinate Qin Shi Huang (259-210 B.C.), the first emperor of the Qin dynasty, by hiding lead pieces in the *zhu* and striking at the emperor with it.¹⁶¹ Many writings by remnant subjects compare the Qing dynasty to the Qin dynasty to emphasize their violent conquest and suppression of opponents. *Remnant Sound of Playing the Zhu* belongs to the same writing tradition. Not only can Gui Zhuang's identification with Gao Jianli be seen in the allusion to the *zhu*, Gui Zhuang was also famous for singing sad songs after drinking wine¹⁶², echoing the story of Gao Jianli playing the *zhu* and singing songs to see off his friend Jin Ke to assassinate Qin Shi Huang.¹⁶³ In addition, they both heroically attacked enemies. *Remnant Sound of Playing the Zhu* thus can be seen as the textual fruit of Gui Zhuang's sad songs through impersonating Gao Jianli.

The format of *Remnant Sound of Playing the Zhu* is like Yang Shen's ballad-narrative in mixing different genres. It begins and ends with a seven syllable quatrain. In the middle are twenty songs written to a variety of tunes that share the same rhyme. The abridged version *Sorrow of Eternity* deletes the framing poems.¹⁶⁴ The reason of the deletion is obvious, as can be

¹⁶⁰ Quan Zuwang 全祖望 (1705-1755), *Jieqiting ji waibian* 鮚埼亭集外編, vol. 31, quoted in *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 589; "Mr. Gui Xuangong's Chronicle" 歸玄恭先生年譜, *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 576.

¹⁶¹ *Shiji*, vol. 86.

¹⁶² *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 580.

¹⁶³ *Zhan guo ce*, "Yan ce san" 燕策三.

¹⁶⁴ The abridged version *Sorrow of Eternity* 萬古愁 doesn't include two poems at the beginning and the end, and the names of the tunes.

seen in the beginning poem quoted here. In this poem, the chill sob of the mutated *zhi*¹⁶⁵ means criticism of moral and political decline, and the solitary minister's heart refers to Gui Zhuang's loyalty to the Ming.

I write new lyrics for music to lament the changes from the past to the present,
I play the *Zhu* while singing the sad song, sorrowful sound is moving.
Don't dislike the chill sob of the mutated *Zhi*.
In it you can tell this solitary minister's heart.
譜得新詞嘆古今，悲歌擊筑動哀音。莫嫌變徵聲悽咽，要識孤臣一片心。¹⁶⁶

If Jia Fuxi views history as a puppet theater to satirize historical actors under the control of profit and fame, Gui Zhuang treats history as a play in that the idea allows him to be the creator/interpreter of the puppet show. He writes that Confucius compiles and judges history as a puppet player manipulates puppets/skeletons. "What is most laughable is that old Confucius reveled in brushes and ink, writing the history of two hundred and forty years as if manipulating dead skeletons." 最可笑那弄筆頭的老尼山，把二百四十年死骷髏提得他沒顛沒倒。¹⁶⁷ In Confucian classics, Confucius' *Spring and Autumn Annals* is considered to continue the function of poetry (in *Shijing*) in *Mengzi*. "When the wooden clappers of the sage-kings ceased, the *Odes* perished. When the *Odes* perished, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* was created" 王者之跡息而詩亡，詩亡而後春秋作。¹⁶⁸ The formulation from *Mengzi* is the precursor for the idea of poetic history or the poet-historian, meaning that poetry assumes the functions of historiography by keeping historical records and passing on historical judgments. However, rather than comparing Confucius' *Spring and Autumn Annals* to poetry, Gui Zhuang views Confucius as a dramatist

¹⁶⁵ Chinese literary historical process was often described in terms of the movement between "proper" 正 and "mutated" 變. "Proper" describes the stability of a government, which is manifest in the tone of the poems of music of the age. "Mutated" appears as a falling away, a devolution, in which the imbalances in society manifest themselves in poetry and music. See Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 47.

¹⁶⁶ *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 161.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

¹⁶⁸ *Mengzi* 8.21, translation is from *Trauma and Transcendence in Early Qing Literature*, p. 75.

and his historical writing as a puppet show. His idea of dramatic history or the dramatist-historian is not just rhetorical, showing the influence of theatrical rhetoric, but assumes larger implications in that drama lends more expressive freedom to historical writing than poetry, given the Confucian poetic tradition of constraint and decorum. While poetry and historiography require indirect expression, treating history as a puppet show allows him to freely unleash anger and sarcasm.

Like Jia Fuxi's drum ballad on history, Gui Zhuang's *Remnant Sound of Playing Zhu* ridicules Chinese history from antiquity to the Yuan dynasty, subverting the Confucian construction of history in official historiography.

Nüwashi, why did you cut the feet of the turtle that served as the pillars of the sky? Youchaoshi, why did you build shelters from the wind? Old Paoxi, you were illiterate, so why did you draw odd and even numbers?¹⁶⁹ Old Shennong, you lacked palate, why did you try the flavor of flowers and herbs? Also, there was old Xuanyuan¹⁷⁰ who asked for trouble. He created the array of fish changing to dragons¹⁷¹ that spread all over the world. He followed his imagination and made the military strategy of the tiger and leopard.¹⁷² Thereupon, he left a knife that would kill people for thousands of years.

那女媧氏你斷什麼柱天鼈？那有巢氏你架什麼避風巢？那不識字的老包羲你畫什麼奇和偶？那不知味的老神農你嘗什麼卉和草？更有那惹禍招非的老軒轅，彌天擺下魚龍陣，象意裝成虎豹韜，便留下一把萬古殺人刀。¹⁷³

But unlike Jia Fuxi who condemns the foundational crime of the Ming dynasty, Gui Zhuang's loyalty to the Ming makes his portrayal of the Ming dynasty unequivocally positive, in contrast

¹⁶⁹ Paoxi is said to create the eight diagrams.

¹⁷⁰ Xuanyuan was the name of a hill where the Yellow Emperor lived and that he took as a name. The Yellow Emperor is regarded as the initiator of Chinese civilization.

¹⁷¹ This refers to the institution of civil examinations. Those who pass the national exam are like fish that jump the Dragon Gate and become dragons.

¹⁷² It is said that Jiang Shang wrote *Six Military Strategies of the Grand Duke*, which includes the strategy of the tiger and the strategy of the leopard. Here the strategy of the tiger and leopard refers to great military talent.

¹⁷³ *Gui Zhuang ji* 歸莊集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984), p. 161.

to the moral ambiguity in Jia Fuxi's treatment of the Ming in his drum ballad. He praises the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty in expelling barbarians from China, and pours out grief at the fall of the Ming.

Only the founding emperor of our great Ming established the new dynasty early in Jinling. He expelled tigers and treated heroes with respect. His forces cast out enemies, and the fog and mist were dispersed. He cleaned the mountains of the country that were once enshrouded in darkness, making the breeze fresh and the moon bright. He conquered barbarians whose language and clothes were extremely dirty and made them the subjects of China.

唯有我大明太祖高皇帝定鼎金陵早，驅貔虎，禮英豪，東征西討，霧散煙消。將一片不見天日的山前山後淨洗得風清月皎，將一番極齷齪不堪的胡言胡服生劈開做中華夷僚。¹⁷⁴

Grieve, I grieve to know that the sacred emperor who reigned for seventeen years covered his face and hanged himself on the Coal Mountain. Grieve, I grieve to know that the corpse of the sacred empress who chanted "Fish Hawks"¹⁷⁵ and inherited good reputation was thrown away at the gate of the inner palace and that not even a palace lady mourned for her in private.

痛痛痛！痛那十七年的圣天子掩面向煤山吊。痛痛痛！痛那詠關雎嗣徽音的聖母屍撇在後宮門沒一個老宮娥私悲悼。¹⁷⁶

The role of the dramatist-historian gives Gui Zhuang expressive freedom to satirize political circumstances during the dynastic transition in a way impossible in poetry and historiography. His description of the betrayal and incompetence of the civil officials of the Ming echoes Jia Fuxi's portrayal of the Shang people's betrayal of the ruler after the conquest of the Zhou. Not only does he criticize civil officials' inconsistency, but he goes so far as to expose sexual exploitation involved in the Manchu invasion.

Resent, I resent that the civil officials, who received imperial favor, profited from imperial mandate, wore black gauze caps (official posts) and golden belts, now kowtow in the enemy's court with memorials making appeals to the enemy to ascend the throne. In addition, the literati who are said to be able to read draft the edict of the ascension to the throne. Those useless, stupid aristocrats are like sheep and pigs, imprisoned in the corner of the east city, with their fingers pressed between sticks as a form of torture. Delicate, pretty girls flirt unscrupulously in daylight. Handsome gentlemen are drawn to the palace to be male

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁷⁵ It's the first poem of *Shijing*, celebrating the virtue of the wife of kings.

¹⁷⁶ *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 163.

concubines. What's more detestable is that while the people on the streets grieve to lose the ruler, thousands of officials in the palace celebrate the morning audience. I would not spare their life even though they were cut into ten thousands of pieces.

恨只恨這些左班官平日裏受皇恩，沾封誥，烏紗罩帽，金帶橫腰，今日里一個個稽首賊庭懷揣著幾篇兒勸進表。更有那叫做識字的文人，還草幾句登極詔。那些不管事的蠹公侯，如羊似豕，都押在東城隩，夾拶著追金寶。嬌滴滴的女妖嬈，白日裏姿淫嬖。俊翩翩縉紳兒，牽去做供奉龍陽料。更可恨九衢萬姓悲無主，三殿千官慶早朝，便萬斬也難饒。

Gui Zhuang's harsh criticism is also toward military officials' failure of defending the Ming dynasty. He uses the rhetorical strategy of rhythmic repetition often found in folk songs to lambaste cowardly officials.

There was no one to establish the banner of a righteous and go to the Jingxing Mountain¹⁷⁷ to set ambush and lead a punitive expedition. There was no one to ride an iron clad horse to cross the Yellow River to defeat enemies. There was no one to cry his eyes out at the Qin court like Shen Baoxu of the Chu.¹⁷⁸ There was no one to shed tears at the New Pavilion like Wang Dao of the Jin Dynasty.¹⁷⁹ There was no one to beat the oar in surging waves.¹⁸⁰ There was no one to get up to practice sword at the rooster's crow¹⁸¹ when stars were quiet and the shadow of the moon was small. There was no one to bite his own tongue and spit blood to the enemy like Yan Gaoqing 顏杲卿, the magistrate of Changshan.¹⁸² There was no one to defend the isolated city and have his head broken in the temple.¹⁸³ Most of them were so scared that they prepared to flee when hearing the sound of the wind and the cry of the crane, presenting Qing, Xu, Yan, and Ji¹⁸⁴ as a gift to the enemy.

¹⁷⁷ The Jingxing Mountain is a branch of the Taihang range. It is an important military fortress.

¹⁷⁸ Shen Baoxu was an official of the Chu in the Spring and Autumn period. When the Wu invaded the Chu, Shen Baoxu cried for seven days at the Qin court to persuade the latter sending armies to save the Chu. The Qin was moved and sent the army. *Zuo zhuan*, the fourth year of Duke Ding 定公四年.

¹⁷⁹ The New Pavilion was a place where scholar-officials of the Eastern Jin had social gatherings. Once in such a gathering, the officials lamented for the lost northern territory and shed tears. The prime minister Wang Dao 王導 (276-339) told them not to cry but work hard to recover the lost territory. *Shishuoxinyu* 世說新語, 2. 31.

¹⁸⁰ This is an allusion to Zu Ti 祖逖 (266-321) of the Eastern Jin leading armies to cross the Yangzi River to recover the lost territory. He beat the oar in the middle of the River 中流擊楫 to swear to recover the lost territory. *Jinshu*, vol. 62.

¹⁸¹ Zu Ti is said to get up and practice sword when hearing the rooster's crow.

¹⁸² Yan Gaoqing (692-756) was appointed the magistrate of Changshan in Hebei province. He fought against An Lushan 安祿山 (703-757) rebellion and was executed by the latter.

¹⁸³ Nan Jiyun 南霁云 (?-757) was a general of the Tang Dynasty. He died fighting An Lushan's army in Suiyang (modern Henan province). After his death he was honored by the Tang court and his sculpture was established in the temple of Suiyang to receive sacrifice. Liu Zongyuan wrote the stele for him.

¹⁸⁴ These four regions belong to nine states 九州 of China.

沒一個建義旗下井陘的張天討，沒一個驅鐵騎渡黃河的把賊膽搖，沒一個痛哭秦庭效楚包，沒一個灑淚新亭做晉導，沒一個擊江楫風湧怒濤高，沒一個舞雞鳴星靜月痕小，沒一個噴賊血截舌似常山梟，沒一個守孤城碎首在睢陽廟。大都是鶴唳風聲預遁逃，把青徐兗濟雙手兒送得早。

The most striking part of Gui Zhuang's *Remnant Sound of Playing Zhu* involves his portrayal of the corruption of the Hongguang Emperor's Southern Ming court. It seems especially appropriate to associate the Southern Ming court with a theater, since the Hongguang Emperor, Zhu Yousong, was obsessed with theater, and many aspects of the court had performative qualities. In an anecdote, Zhu Yousong was said to be unhappy on New Year's Eve of 1644, and when asked if it was because he was thinking of his parents, he answered, "There are not many good actors in the Pear Garden (the imperial theater)" 梨園殊少佳者¹⁸⁵. In another anecdote, "When Ruan Dacheng made a rally to pledge resolution at the Yangzi River, he wore a white embroidered robe with an emerald belt. People were surprised that he was dressed like an actor." 阮大鍼誓師江上, 衣素蟒, 圍碧玉, 見者詫為梨園裝束.¹⁸⁶ Historical accounts on the Southern Ming court are full of such anecdotes, ballads, and proverbs that ridicule the court. It seems there is a correspondence between these gossips and the frivolous nature of the court. Gui Zhuang's portrayal of the court also takes advantage of this correspondence, using wordplay and vulgar vernacular to reveal sordid political schemes of the court. According to the historical account *Luqiao jiwen* 鹿樵紀聞, Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601-1645) and other righteous late Ming officials refused Zhu Yousong's ascendancy on the ground of Zhu's lack of moral integrity and learning, but Ma Shiying 馬士英 (ca.1591-1646), who happened to meet Zhu while the latter was in exile and thus kept Zhu as a rare commodity for his own benefit, convinced a group of military

¹⁸⁵ *Luqiao jiwen* 鹿樵紀聞, shang 上, in *Taiwan wenxian congkan*, no. 127, p. 9.

¹⁸⁶ *Luqiao jiwen*, p. 6.

officials to support Zhu by promising them high ranks.¹⁸⁷ Facing Zuo Liangyu's threat of crossing the Yangzi River and Manchu attack, Ma Shiying repudiated many officials' suggestion of withdrawing troops from fighting against Zuo Liangyu, saying "I would rather die by the hand of the Northern Army than by the hand of Zuo Liangyu"寧死北, 毋死左.¹⁸⁸ Ballads that were popular during the time of the Southern Ming court vividly reveal the fact that Ma Shiying and his clique dominated the court to make it a ready source of profit. "Secretariats are everywhere, and military governors fill the street. ... All the money of the southland is swept away to fill the mouths of the Ma family" 中書隨地有, 都督滿街走. 掃盡江南錢, 填塞馬家口.¹⁸⁹ Modeled on these ballads, Gui Zhuang's song satirizes Zhu Yousong's supporters' scheme of dividing up the southland.

Prince Fu (Zhu Yousong) rose in Jinling, and the comet shone on the southland. They boasted their strategies, promoted their supporters, and showed off iron contracts¹⁹⁰. They made evil associates and made noise like cicadas and mole crickets. The region between the Yangzi River and the Huai River is small. It's not for the fight of a group of wolves. The southland, half of the Chinese territory, is not a place for warlords to fish.

金陵福王興, 江南彗星照。誇定策推翼戴鐵券兒晃耀, 招狐朋樹狗黨蝸蛄般喳噪。那掌大的兩淮供不得群狼吵, 便半壁的江南也下不得諸公釣。

While the court was torn apart by factions inside and threatened by Li Zicheng's rebellion and the Manchu army outside, Zhu Yousong kept on ordering to select imperial concubines, resulting in several girls' suicide and social upheaval. Ma Shiying stood between Zhu Yousong and court officials, not letting Zhu see memorials of remonstrance and making him a puppet, who "did nothing but took pleasures in performing northern *zaju* drama, drinking liquor, and having sex

¹⁸⁷ *Luqiao jiwen*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁹⁰ The iron contract is a pantile shaped iron, engraved with words. Emperors grant it to officials to reward their outstanding services.

with underage girls” 惟以演雜劇，飲火酒，淫幼女為樂。¹⁹¹ It is said that Zhu Yousong ordered beggars to submit toads to make aphrodisiac, so he was called “Emperor of Toads” 蛤蟆天子。¹⁹² Just as anecdotes and proverbs represent the voices of the people to some extent, Gui Zhuang’s song mercilessly lampoons Zhu Yousong’s indulgence in pleasures and its disastrous aftermath from the perspective of an outsider of the political center.

They made monkey business, and lazed away days in infatuation. They never stopped presenting singers and dancers to the Hongguang Emperor, and never stopped choosing beautiful girls. The Hongguang Emperor drank spirits, as drunk as a fiddler every day. His majesty was such a heavy drinker that a thousand goblets of wine could barely satisfy him. It is also said that his majesty was more potent and well-endowed than Xue Aocao (624-705)¹⁹³. Fortunately, the secret sexual medicine made of the venom of toads was wonderful. It’s incomprehensible that before the enemy’s challenge to war reached the Ganquan Palace¹⁹⁴, the imperial carriage decorated with emerald feathers was already on the way to the Tongguan pass.¹⁹⁵ Suddenly southerners were frightened, and northerners were arrogant. The Yangzi River stunk, and the imperial air of the Zhong Mountain¹⁹⁶ disappeared. The reign of the Han Chinese ended.

胡哄哄鬧一回，癡迷迷溺幾朝。獻不迭歌喉舞腰，選不迭花容月貌，終日裏醉醺醺，喝燒刀，御量千鐘少。更傳聞聖躬堅巨賽敖曹，卻虧了蟾酥秘藥方兒妙。沒來由羽書未達甘泉報，翠華先上了潼關道，一霎時南人膽搖，北人志驕，長江水臊，鐘山氣消，已不是漢人年號。

Gui Zhuang’s lampoon of the Hongguang emperor’s court is followed by his decision of not succumbing to the power of money and not writing memorials of surrender for it again.

I will never submit memorials of surrendering to barbarians to the small court; never pay money to the kingdom controlled by the god of money to make connections; never kneel to

¹⁹¹ *Luqiao jiwen*, p. 6.

¹⁹² As a parallel, because Ma Shiyong enjoyed cricket fighting, he was nicknamed “Mr. Cricket” 蟋蟀相公. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁹³ Xue Aocao is said to be the lover of Empress Wu (624-705) of the Tang Dynasty.

¹⁹⁴ The Ganquan Palace is a palace of the Qin Dynasty. Here it refers to the Southern Ming court.

¹⁹⁵ The Tongguan pass was built in the Eastern Han in Shanxi. Here it refers to the border between the region controlled by the Southern Ming and the region controlled by the Manchus.

¹⁹⁶ The Zhong Mountain is in Jinling.

present fine pants and coats¹⁹⁷ to those who were drunk and in a state of ecstasy. I will pluck all the hairs of mice and wolves¹⁹⁸ and smash gold ingots. I have broken with high officials¹⁹⁹ and said farewell to paper.²⁰⁰ I will retire to the lush woods, luxuriant grasses, the mountain side, and the river side, singing and keeping company with the fisher and the woodcutter.

俺再不向小朝廷拜獻降胡表，再不向錢神國告納通關鈔，再不向眾醉鄉跪進精渾襖。拔盡鼠狼毫，椎碎陳元寶，萬石君已絕交，楮先生告辭了，俺自向長林豐草，山坳水嶠，一曲伴漁樵。

His gesture of abandoning brushes and paper not only indicates that he refuses to serve the court, but also emphasizes his distrust in writing, since his farewell to brushes and paper is followed by the description of his singing songs and becoming the fisher and the woodcutter. His refusal of writing documents for the court can be understood to be his refusal of engaging in writing by extension. The written word is associated with official history and court historians, whereas song and storytelling are domains of the fisher and the woodcutter, who possess higher wisdom than court historians and pass on their judgments of history through oral transmission.

In the last song, following the lyrical ideal of withdrawing from the world to become the fisher and the woodcutter, Gui Zhuang mixes lyrical transcendence of sordid reality and the theatrical world with the formal features of *sanqu lyric* that have been represented in the previous songs, including the use of vulgar vernacular, wordplay in the use of the same rhyme, and rhythmic repetition, achieving a combination of lyricism and vulgarity of popular songs.

I will stand on the hillside and next to the middle of the water, gaze at the waves of the clouds and sea, lean against the top of the plum tree and willow tree, listen to the sound of the bell and chime stone, and sleep in the chamber of immortals and Buddha, despite the sun and

¹⁹⁷ In *Sorrow of Eternity*, 渾襖 is written as 禪襖, meaning pants and coats. Since 渾襖 doesn't make sense, I choose 禪襖.

¹⁹⁸ Brushes are made of the hairs of mice and wolves. Plucking all the hairs of mice and wolves means not to write any more.

¹⁹⁹ Mr. Ten Thousands of Dan (a unit of measure for grain) was the title of Shi Fen 石奮 of the Han Dynasty. He and his four sons were high officials, and their salary in total equated to ten thousands of Dan. Here it refers to high officials.

²⁰⁰ In Han Yu's essay "Memoir of Mao Ying" 毛穎傳, brush, ink, ink stone, and paper are personified, and paper is personified as Mr. Chu.

moon high in the sky. In the end I will not have a shred of worry. Indeed I will be like a fish jumping into the sea and a bird that is freed from the cage and flies away to the blue sky. Even though they make the silver seal and blue sash²⁰¹ as bait and the gold seal and purple sash as a fishing line, and fish with a huge net, pooh, I will shake the head and wag the tail like a fish, never coming back.

傍山腰水腰, 望雲濤海濤, 倚梅梢柳梢, 聽鐘敲磬敲, 臥仙寮佛寮, 任日高月高. 到頭來沒些兒半愁半惱, 真個是縱海魚, 離籠鳥, 翻身直透碧雲霄. 恁便是銀青作餌, 金紫為綸, 漫天匝地張羅釣, 呸呸呸! 俺老先生擺尾搖頭再不來了.

Conclusion

Three characters discussed in this paper, Yang Shen, Jia Fuxi, and Gui Zhuang, are all famous for their eccentricity. Yang Shen had a romantic persona, Jia Fuxi claimed to pursue profit, and Gui Zhuang was a heroic monk. Their eccentricity lies in that they played roles other than Confucians. They played roles because they were disillusioned to be Confucian scholar-officials, and their role play was in accord with their interest in theater, storytelling, and popular songs, which were traditionally low genres and practiced by people with low social station. Low genres facilitate the expression of irony, invective, and cynicism in their ballad-narratives. Though resentment 怨 is one function of Chinese classical poetry according to Confucian poetics,²⁰² Confucian teachings of decorum and constraint more or less suppress the expression of resentment in poetry, or allow resentment only if it does not become rage 怨而不怒²⁰³. Confucian historiography also asks historians to refrain from outspoken remarks. Thus it is only in popular genres such as drum ballad and *sanqu* lyric that they could pour out resentment, anger, and grief. In addition, the entertaining, playful character of theater gives a new twist to resentment by adding humor and laugh to it, thus creating a psychologically more complex expression of

²⁰¹ This refers to the clothes of officials of high ranks.

²⁰² *Analects*, 17.9. It originally describes the functions of *Shijing*, but later extends to poetry in general.

²⁰³ *Guoyu* 國語, vol. 1.

resentment. Low genres also offer a channel for politically marginalized literati and remnant subjects to explore the commensurability between theater and history, and to view history as a puppet show, a story, and a song by the fisherman and the woodcutter. In Yang Shen's ballad-narrative, the commensurability between a puppet show and history allows him to express lyrical lament for the temporality of human existence. Jia Fuxi's drum ballad also combines theater with lyricism, but its most striking part is his view of historical actors as puppets driven by selfish motives, creating a curious dialogue between his celebration of his own pursuit of self-interest and his morally based criticism of history. Like Yang Shen and Jia Fuxi, Gui Zhuang views historical actors as puppets, but it is not fate or selfish motives but he himself as a dramatist-historian that controls puppets. Thus moral ambiguity in Jia Fuxi's drum ballad is replaced by clear-cut judgments of good and evil in Gui Zhuang's *sanqu* lyric, and lyrical lament in Yang Shen's ballad-narrative and Jia Fuxi's drum ballad becomes lyrical triumph of being able to control and transcend the theatrical world. In all, three characters and their historical narratives reveal the contributions low genres and theatrical culture make to historiography and lyricism.

Chapter Five

Writing, Dreaming, and Painting: Redefining Time and Space

In the eighth month of 1644, four months after the fall of the Ming capital to Li Zicheng's rebel army, earthquakes happened in southeast China. Alluding to the Confucian correspondence between celestial phenomena and human affairs, Wu Weiye wrote a note on the earthquakes, "There were three earthquakes in one day. The Changgeng comet¹ appeared in the east, shining brightly. There are shadows of swords and banners reflected in it. Zhang Xianzhong (1606-1647) captured Chengdu. The people revolted in Dongyang, Zhejiang." 地一日三震. 長庚見東方, 光芒閃爍, 中有刀劍旌旆之影. 張獻忠陷成都. 浙江東陽民變.² In the eleventh month of the same year, the ancestral tombs of Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398), the founding emperor of the Ming, in Fengyang were damaged by earthquakes. Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601-1645) submitted a memorial to the Hongguang emperor to remind him of the urgent situation by drawing a parallel between the damaged tombs and the country in turmoil, "The imperial tombs are in desolation, and mountains and rivers are boiling in a seething cauldron" 陵廟荒蕪, 山河鼎沸.³ As the Ming suffered from earthquakes, social upheaval, and foreign invasion simultaneously, the mountains and rivers of the country were torn both in a literal and metaphorical sense. The tendency of the Chinese language to replace abstract concepts with concrete images determines that such phrases as "mountains and rivers boiling in a seething cauldron" take up political connotations in an age of war, violence, and devastation. Spatial phrases obtain political connotations, and accordingly

¹ The comet is said to herald war. *Shiji*, vol. 27. 1336.

² *Luqiao jiwen*, p. 5. The book is attributed to Wu Weiye.

³ *Luqiao jiwen*, p. 7.

defining space becomes a political gesture. One of such phrases is “inundated land” 陸沉.⁴ Lamenting the fall of the Ming into the hands of the Manchus, Gu Yanwu wrote, “China has become inundated land” 神州已陸沉.⁵ Perhaps the spatial image most commonly employed in the writings of remnant subjects to refer to the fallen dynasty in Chinese history is “broken space” (literally broken mountains and remains of waters) 殘山剩水. It was first used in Du Fu’s 杜甫 (712-770) poetic couplet “This stream of yours, as though borrowed from the blue Yangzi./ This bit of mountain sliced off from the Jieshi rocks⁶” 剩水滄江破, 殘山碣石開.⁷ In this couplet the phrase simply means that the pond and artificial mountain in a private villa seem to be an extension of rivers and mountains in nature. The phrase later developed from a synecdoche for nature to a synecdoche for the fallen dynasty. Southern Song painters’ tendency to portray a fragment or a corner of landscape was traditionally interpreted to be a pictorial rendering of the Southern Song court’s loss of sovereignty over north China.⁸ Thus the phrase “broken mountains and remains of waters” evoked both the fragmented landscape and compromised sovereignty. The double associations of the phrase explain its resurgence in the writings of early Qing remnant subjects. First of all, remnant subjects transferred their feelings of being left behind by the Ming dynasty and their pain of being destroyed by the dynastic transition to the fragmented landscape detached from its original locale. Second, in the fragmented landscape they found that presence was in absence. Thus Kong Shangren portrayed broken mountains as a token of the past

⁴ It is an allusion to *Shishuo xinyu*, 26. 11.

⁵ Gu Yanwu, “To the Lofty Minded Gentleman Zuoming to Wuxing” 吳興行贈歸高士祚明, quoted in *Gui Zhuang ji*, p. 583.

⁶ Burton Watson’s translation. Jieshi rock is a rock formation off the northern coast of China.

⁷ “Accompanying Mr. Zheng of the Broad Learning Academy on an Outing to General He’s Mountain Villa” 陪鄭廣文游何將軍山林, no.5 of ten poems, in *Dushi xiangzhu*, 2. 151.

⁸ Wang Keyu 汪珂玉, *Shanhuwang* 珊瑚網, 29. 485.

destroyed by political cataclysm. “The broken mountains are the most real in my dreams. The old landscape cannot be forgotten even though I want to get rid of it” 殘山夢最真，舊境丟難掉。⁹ While mournful nostalgia coded in broken mountains and remains of waters dominated early Qing writings, a rare and more original approach to broken space was to reconcile with damage and celebrate its result. We will see this new way of defining space in Zhang Dai’s essays.

From Broken Space to the Peach Blossom Spring

At the beginning of the essay “The Cao Mountain” 曹山, Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597-1684) describes the process whereby the Cao Mountain was carved and chiseled by people who took it as a quarry rather than a mountain.

The Cao Mountain was a quarry. Those who chiseled rocks there numbered more than hundreds, but they never regarded the mountain as part of a landscape. They chiseled hard rocks, and left those with flaws; they chiseled whole rocks, and left broken ones; they chiseled thick rocks, and left thin ones. As time went by, what was left behind became high hills; broken rocks cracked, becoming lofty peaks; thin rocks were rifted, becoming smooth gates. Thus hard rocks were cut down day by day, and cliffs came into being; whole rocks were carved day by day, and grand chambers emerged; thick rocks were layered day by day, and steep ranges thrust out. Mosses grew on rocks, climbing figs grew in the earth, and the mountain was covered in lush greens. In deep recesses were deep pools, and in the shallow were shallows where boats could pass through. Terraces were built on low slopes, kiosks were built on high peaks, and then it looked like a painting displayed in the mountain. Therefore, the original Cao Mountain was abandoned, but after all no one could abandon it; later the Cao Mountain was made, but after all no one could make it. This is because Heaven worked here. The making of the Cao Mountain was not something men could control, nor was it something Heaven could predict.

曹山，石宕也。鑿石者數什百指，絕不作山水想。鑿其堅者，瑕則置之；鑿其整者，碎則置之；鑿其厚者，薄則置之。日積月累，瑕者墮，則塊然阜也；碎者裂，則巋然峰也；薄者穿，則砢然門也。由是堅者日削，而峭壁生焉；整者日琢，而廣廈出焉；厚者日礫，而危巒突焉。石則苔蘚，土則薜荔，而蓊蔚興焉；深則重淵，淺則灘瀨，而舟楫通焉；低則樓臺，高則亭榭，而圖畫萃焉。則是先之曹山，為人所廢，而人不能終廢之。後之曹山，為人所造，而人不能終造之。此其間有天焉，人所不能主，而天所不及料也。¹⁰

⁹ Kong Shangren, *The Peach Blossom Fan*, 4. 260.

¹⁰ *Zhang Dai shiwenji* 張岱詩文集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991), p. 172-3.

Zhang Dai's description of the quarry reveals a process of damage and rebirth. The workers at the quarry chose hard, whole, and thick rocks, and left cracked, broken and thin rocks behind. However, rocks that were left behind gradually became hills and peaks and the new Cao Mountain came into being. Human interference seemed to destroy the old Cao Mountain, but the new mountain was the fruit of the damage men made to the old one. Zhang Dai attributes the making of the new Cao Mountain to *tian* 天, but his definition of *tian* is unique in that here it is not a creator that controls the destiny of the Cao Mountain, but rather a witness of an inevitable process. Zhang Dai perceives an inevitable process as a natural process. It is inevitable and natural for men to choose hard, whole, and thick rocks at the quarry for the sake of living; it is also inevitable and natural that rocks left behind reshaped themselves. *Tian* could mean everything beyond the control of men, but here What Zhang Dai means by *tian* conflates its two basic meanings: Heaven and nature. Thus the Cao Mountain is the work of *tian* in the sense that social necessity and geological movements make it and that Heaven witnesses its formation without being able to predict or interfere with its formation.

Following the logic of the Cao Mountain as the work of *tian*, Zhang Dai ruminates on the significance of the natural process that makes a typical "broken mountain".

I think that the mountain was destroyed by men and men destroyed what could not but be destroyed, and what had been destroyed became a mountain again; the water was left behind by men and men left over what could not but be left over, but what had been left behind still remained water. The mountain and river are persevering, so they don't lose their original selves. ... Therefore, in this world there are things that suffer from being devastated but also benefit from being devastated. The Cao Mountain is an example in this case.

吾想山為人所殘，殘其所不得不殘，而殘復為山；水為人所剩，剩其所不得不剩，而剩還為水。山水倔強，仍不失其故我。..... 則世有受摧殘之苦，而反得摧殘之力者，曹山是也。¹¹

¹¹ Ibid., p. 173.

Not only can mountains and rivers survive damage, but it is thanks to the damage that they become real mountains and rivers. Zhang Dai's view that the Cao Mountain benefits from damage evokes Zhuangzi's relativism. "Their dividedness is their completeness; their completeness is their impairment." 其分也, 成也; 其成也, 毀也.¹² The fact that the old Cao Mountain was carved, chiseled, and therefore damaged only to contribute to the formation of the new Cao Mountain resonates with Zhuangzi's teaching that completeness is preceded by impairment, or vice versa. The same teaching can also be applied to human being. Zhang Dai's admiration of the perseverant mountains and rivers that never lose their real selves evokes early Qing remnant subjects' constancy and commitment. The parallel between "broken mountains and remains of rivers" and remnant subjects can be found in many early Qing writings, but Zhang Dai gives new twists to this discourse. The first twist is that he implies suffering and hardship remnant subjects experienced during the dynastic transition could not destroy them but rather strengthen their integrity. While implying political implications of "broken mountains and remains of rivers," Zhang Dai makes a second twist by directing his essay to a larger theme of recognition. This can be seen in the conclusion of the essay. "If no one in the world understands me, I would rather they kill me. Therefore, those who torture me still count as those who understand me" 世不知我, 不如殺之, 則世之摧殘我者, 猶知我者也.¹³ The conclusion evokes a long tradition of tortured talents in Chinese literature. In Han Yu's 韓愈 (768-824) poem "Teasing Zhang Ji" 調張籍, heaven wants Li Bai 李白 (701-762) and Du Fu to write beautiful poems so it sends them to earth to suffer. In Li Shangyin's 李商隱 (812-858) "Short Biography of Li He" 李賀小傳, Li He's premature death is said to be the result of his unparalleled talent. The god invites him to heaven

¹² "Discussion on Making All Things Equal" 齊物論, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 70, Burton Watson's translation.

¹³ *Zhang Dai shiwenji*, p. 173.

to change the situation that not many are as talented as him there. Zhang Dai's inheritance of the discourse of talented men's ill fate both obliquely criticizes the social, political world and reconciles with reality in terms of Daoist wisdom.

Zhang Dai also extends the discourse of recognizing talented men to the recognition of unknown space. Heaven should be the judge of talents, but since Heaven is simply a witness of the formation of the Cao Mountain, it is Zhang Dai the writer who discovers the value of the Cao Mountain and thus partakes of the authority of Heaven. "The Cao Mountain" is the first one of a group of five essays titled "Five Unknown Mountains in the Yue" 越山五佚記. All five essays parallel recognizing talents with recognizing unknown space. In the preface to these essays, Zhang Dai describes the failure of Heaven to recognize these mountains and declares his aim of repairing the flaws of Heaven.

Among mountains and rivers of the Yue, the Cao Mountain and the Hou Mountain were manmade, so Heaven is not their master; the Guai Mountain was moved by the earth, so Heaven can't imprison it; the Huangzhuo Mountain and Emei Mountain were hidden by people, and Heaven wasn't able to make them seen. I, Mr. Zhang, aim to mend the flaws of Heaven, writing accounts of five unknown mountains of the Yue. Then they are still made by Heaven, moved by Heaven, and hidden by Heaven. Therefore, Mr. Zhang's achievement is not beneath Nüwa's.

越中山水，曹山、吼山為人所造，天不得而主也；怪山為地所徙，天不得而圉也；黃琢、峨眉為人所匿，天不得而發也。張子志在補天，為作越山五佚，則造仍天造，徙仍天徙，匿仍天匿也。故張子之功，不在女媧氏下。¹⁴

Among five mountains, two were manmade, so Heaven cannot be said to be their master; the other two mountains were overlooked by men because of their hidden locations, so even Heaven was not able to make them known; the last one was made by geological movements, so Heaven was not involved in its formation. Zhang Dai argues that since Heaven does not fulfill its responsibility of creating and acknowledging these mountains, Heaven has flaws that need to be

¹⁴ Zhang Dai *shiwenji*, p. 172.

repaired. If Nüwa repairs the hole in the sky in the ancient legend,¹⁵ Zhang Dai purports to repair moral flaws of Heaven.

Repairing the flaws of Heaven implies the absence of a moral authority in an age of social and political upheaval. The way in which men like Zhang Dai take up the moral vacuum left by Heaven is through the act of writing. He celebrates the power of writing to rediscover and redefine space. If Heaven's indifference to these mountains makes it only a titular master, Zhang Dai breathes new life to them by making them into textual space. The resonance of Li He's 李賀 (790-816) poetic line, "The brush makes ood Creation, heaven has no merits" 筆補造化天無功,¹⁶ is heard in Zhang Dai's claim of repairing Heaven. As with Li He, Zhang Dai is proud of his writing that is able to create what is not seen in nature, but the idea that writing restores the moral order of the world belongs to Zhang Dai himself. The fact that Zhang Dai draws an analogy between writing and repairing the flaws of Heaven also reminds the reader of the quatrain inscribed on the stone in the eighteenth-century novel, *Dream of the Red Chamber*. "Found unfit to repair the azure sky. /Long years a foolish mortal man was I. /My life in both worlds on this stone is writ. /Pray who will copy out and publish it?"¹⁷ The great novelist Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 (1715?-1763?) compares his narrative that "purports to fill the void left by the concealment of real events"¹⁸ to the skill of repairing Heaven. If we read Zhang Dai's analogy against Li He's line and Cao Xueqin's quatrain, his claim of repairing the flaws of Heaven also seems to have a fictional feature.

¹⁵ *Huainanzi* 淮南子, vol. 6.

¹⁶ Li He, "Gao xuan guo" 高軒過, *Quan Tang Shi* 全唐詩, vol. 393, p. 2650; Wai-ye Li's translation, *Enchantment and Disenchantment*, p. 167.

¹⁷ David Hawkes' translation, *The Story of the Stone*, vol. 1 (Penguin Books, 1973).

¹⁸ Wai-ye Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1993), pp. 167-8.

Fictionality of Zhang Dai's descriptions of five unknown mountains lies in his perception of them as variations of the Peach Blossom Spring.

If a muddy pill blocked the mouth of the valley, then it would be like a dim, distant Peach Blossom Spring, and certainly no one would be able to cross the ford to be there. ("The Hou Mountain")

肯以一丸泥封其谷口，則官然桃源，必無津逮者矣。¹⁹

The Mang and Dang Mountains²⁰ are covered by clouds, and the road to the Peach Blossom Spring is blocked. ("The Huangzhuo Mountain")

雲迷芒碭，路塞桃源。²¹

Heaven wants to hide this mountain in secrecy, not to be seen by anyone. If the mountain has spirit, how can it be imprisoned forever? If it wants to get rid of the constraints, it has to fly away. ("The Emei Mountain")

天意欲終秘此山，勿使人見。山果有靈，焉能久困，欲脫藩籬，斷須飛去。²²

He uses the discourse surrounding the Peach Blossom Spring to depict these mountains, making them secret space beyond the human world. He also emphasizes that they are like the Peach Blossom Spring in the sense that they only reveal themselves to those who truly appreciate them. If the fisherman in Tao Qian's "Account of the Peach Blossom Spring" 桃花源記 finds the way to the Peach Blossom Spring by an accident, Zhang Dai rescues five mountains from obscurity through the act of writing. After all, the Peach Blossom Spring is the most famous textual space in Chinese literary history, and Zhang Dai aims to create the Peach Blossom Spring of his own time.

Calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring

¹⁹ Zhang Dai *shiwenji*, p. 174.

²⁰ Liu Bang (256 B.C.-195 B.C.), the founding emperor of the Han dynasty, hid in the Mang and Dang Mountains to escape his enemies.

²¹ Zhang Dai *shiwenji*, p. 178.

²² Zhang Dai *shiwenji*, p. 179.

Zhang Dai's attempt to create textual space that resonates with the Peach Blossom Spring is also seen in his essay "Calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring" 桃源曆序. In this essay, defining space is intertwined with defining time. The Peach Blossom Spring is beyond the human world, because it has a special way of defining time. Zhang Dai's inspiration may come from Tao Qian's poem attached to "Account of the Peach Blossom Spring." In this poem, Tao Qian suggests that the Peach Blossom Spring does not need a calendar because it follows the rhythm of nature. "When grasses are exuberant, they know that warm spring has come. /When trees wither, they know that the wind has been strong. /Though they don't have a calendar, /four seasons naturally make a year." 草榮識節和, 木衰知風厲. 雖無紀曆誌, 四時自成歲.²³ Zhang Dai's essay expresses the same idea and suggests its political connotations. The Peach Blossom Spring is different from any place in the world in that it does not have a calendar and is therefore independent of dynastic chronology, as is said in Tao Qian's account, "They (the people in the land of the Peach Blossom Spring) did not know that there had been the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.), let alone the Wei (220-265) and Jin (265-420)" 不知有漢, 無論魏晉.²⁴

Which place in the world doesn't have a calendar? Since ancient times the village of the Peach Blossom Spring is the only place that doesn't have a calendar. Because it doesn't have a calendar, people there don't know the existence of the Han, Wei, and Jin dynasties; because it doesn't have a calendar, when grasses grow they grow plants, when grasses decay they harvest,²⁵ they have cold and warm days without having awareness of winter and summer, and they sow and harvest without having awareness of spring and autumn; because it doesn't have a calendar, they aren't bothered by summer and winter sacrifices every year, and don't suffer from being pressed by the court to pay taxes. Chickens and dogs, mulberry trees, hems, peach blossoms, flowing water, how great is the joy of the Peach Blossom Spring! People who live outside the Peach Blossom Spring have a myriad of affairs, a myriad of sufferings, and a myriad of sighs and sobs, simply because they have a calendar. If they want to use the

²³ *Tao Yuanming ji jiaojian*, 6. 403.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 402.

²⁵ This is an allusion to *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, vol. 26.

calendar of the outside world to make a calendar of our Peach Blossom Spring, that would be extremely unfortunate for the people of the Peach Blossom Spring.

天下何在無曆？自古無曆者，惟桃花源一村。人以無曆，故無漢無魏、晉；以無曆，故見生樹生，見死獲死，有寒暑而無冬夏，有稼穡而無春秋；以無曆，故無歲時伏臘之擾，無王稅催科之苦，雞犬桑麻，桃花流水，其樂何似？桃源以外之人，惟多此一曆，其事千萬，其苦千萬，其感慨悲泣千萬，乃欲以此曆曆我桃源，則桃源之人亦不幸甚矣。

Zhang Dai uses the term *li* both as a noun and a verb, meaning the calendar and to regulate. Thus he introduces the socio-political meaning of the passage of time. He attributes political significance to the calendar, and his suggestion of creating the calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring also becomes a political gesture. In the second part of the essay, he imagines creating the calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring that follows the rhythm of nature to regulate time that is otherwise regulated by the dynastic calendar, the symbol of the authoritative sociopolitical order.

However, my calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring is different from the normal calendar. *The Calendar of People of Four Professions*²⁶ says, “When the Milky Way is opposite the Horn star,²⁷ it’s time to work at night; when the Big Dipper²⁸ disappears, the water freezes.” It also says, “When dragonflies cry, clothes are made; when crickets cry, lazy wives are startled.” I don’t depend on the position of the *Ji* star and *Xuan* star of the Big Dipper²⁹ to make my calendar, nor do I use the ashes of reed membranes.³⁰ Rather I use the appearance of stars and the sound of insects to infer the time of harvest and weaving. My calendar does not have reign titles, so there are no Wei and Jin dynasties; it doesn’t use the sexagenry cycle, so there is no need to have officials of clepsydra.³¹ The order of seasons is as it is in the past to follow silkworms in spring and harvest in autumn. The order of months is correct because it follows the time of trees withering and grasses growing. If the people of the Peach Blossom Spring read my calendar, they would say, “This calendar does not use the normal calendar to regulate the Peach Blossom Spring, but uses the Peach Blossom Spring to regulate the normal calendar.

²⁶ Its author is Cui Shi 崔寔 (ca.103-170).

²⁷ The Horn star (Mansion) is one of the Twenty-eight mansions of the Chinese constellations.

²⁸ The *Li* star 犁星 is another name for the Big Dipper.

²⁹ *Tian Ji* 天璣 and *Tian Xuan* 天璇 are two of the seven stars that constitute the Big Dipper in ancient Chinese astronomy.

³⁰ The ashes of reed membranes were traditionally put in the pitch pipes and used to decide the arrival of seasons.

³¹ Ancient Chinese clepsydra is called *hulou* 壺漏.

There is no calendar, but still there is a calendar. What harm would this calendar do to the Peach Blossom Spring?” Therefore, I made *Calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring*.

雖然，余之作曆也，則異於是。余讀《四民月令》有曰：“河射角，堪夜作；犁星沒，水生骨。”又曰：“蜻蛉鳴，衣裘成；蟋蟀鳴，懶婦驚。”無事璣璇，推開灰葭，仍以星出蟲吟，推人耕織。不存年號，無魏晉也；不立甲子，無壺官也。春蠶秋熟，歲序依然，木落草榮，時令不失。桃源人見之曰：“是曆也，非以曆曆桃源，仍以桃源曆曆曆也。無曆而有曆，曆亦何害桃源哉？”作《桃源曆》。³²

In imperial China years are named with emperors' era names. Since Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty declared the first era name in 140 B.C., when each emperor ascended the throne, he declared a new era name to replace an old one as a way of legitimizing his imperial power. The founding emperor of the Qing dynasty issued the era name “Mandate of Heaven” 天命 in 1616, meaning that the Manchus possessed the mandate of Heaven. Many cases of literary inquisition 文字獄 of the Qing dynasty involved the issue of using the era names of the Ming dynasty, as will be discussed in the next section. The era system defines time by politicizing it, but Zhang Dai challenges political time by restoring time that is regulated by changes in nature. His calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring redefines time that is controlled by the court and represented in era names, and redefining time is his way of escaping the current sociopolitical circumstances.

Heaven's Library

“Five Unknown Mountains in the Yue” and “Calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring” are included in Zhang Dai's *Collection of Langhuan* 瑯嬛文集. *Langhuan* is the abbreviation of the Blessed Land of *Langhuan* 瑯嬛福地, which is an abode of immortals in Chinese legend. The Blessed Land of *Langhuan* is different from other immortal lands in that it is also Heaven's library, where rare and lost books are preserved. Using *Langhuan* to entitle his collection indicates that Zhang Dai's spatial imagination is closely related to the idea of writing and

³² Zhang Dai *shiwenji*, p. 115.

preserving books. *Collection of Langhuan* includes one essay titled “Account of the Blessed Land of Langhuan” 瑯嬛福地記, a story of Zhang Hua’s 張華 (232-300) visit of the Blessed Land of *Langhuan*. The same story is first seen in Yi Shizhen’s 伊世珍 (13th century) “Account of *Langhuan*” 瑯嬛記, the first piece in Yi Shizhen’s collection of classical tales of the same name. Zhang Dai’s portrayal of the Blessed Land of *Langhuan* is largely based on Yi Shizhen’s tale, but he incorporates the elements of the Peach Blossom Spring to make a new version of the Blessed Land. Yi Shizhen’s “Account of *Langhuan*” begins thus: “Zhang Maoxian was learned and had great memory. He was once an assistant administrator in Jian’an prefecture. While on the way of visiting a Daoist temple, he met a stranger.” 張茂先博學強記, 嘗為建安從事, 游於洞宮, 遇一人于途.³³ But the beginning of Zhang Dai’s essay follows the model of Tao Qian’s “Account of the Peach Blossom Spring” 桃花源記, “In the Taikang reign (280-289) of the Western Jin dynasty, Zhang Maoxian was an assistant administrator in Jian’an prefecture. Once he visited the Dong Mountain, following a stream to explore the depth of the mountain.”³⁴ 晉太康中, 張茂先為建安從事, 游於洞山, 緣溪深入. This is a close rewriting of the beginning of “Account of the Peach Blossom Spring,” “During the Taiyuan reign (376-396) of the Eastern Jin dynasty, a man of Wuling made a living as a fisherman. Once while following a stream, he forgot how far he had gone.” 晉太元中, 武陵人捕魚為業. 緣溪行, 忘路之遠近.³⁵ While Yi Shizhen portrays the Blessed Land of *Langhuan* as a heavenly palace, highlighting its magnificent architecture 宮室差峩, Zhang Dai emphasizes that it is a study 精舍. Like the Peach Blossom Spring, the Blessed Land of *Langhuan* is found accidentally, and once the person who

³³ *Congshu jicheng chubian* 叢書集成初編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1991), p. 1.

³⁴ “Dong gong” 洞宮 is a place where immortals live, so it can be taken as a synonym of the Daoist Temple. See Tao Hongjing 陶弘景, *Zhengao* 真誥, vol. 11; “Dong shan” 洞天 is not specifically associated with religion.

³⁵ *Tao Yuanming ji jiaojian*, 6. 402.

finds it leaves, it is never retrievable. As Zhang Hua stepped outside the Blessed Land, “the stone gate suddenly closed. Weeds and vines wound around the stone. Mosses also covered the whole stone. It seems the stone had never had a crack.” 門石忽然自閉，禿草藤蘿，遶石而生，石上苔蘚亦合，初無縫隙。³⁶ While both in Yi’s and Zhang’s versions, the Blessed Land is hidden behind the stone like the Peach Blossom Spring secluded from the outside world, Zhang Dai makes another deliberate step toward Tao Qian’s imaginary space by adding a poem to his essay. The first four lines of Tao Qian’s poem are as follows. “Ying Zheng (260-20 B.C.) disturbed the order of Heaven. /The worthies escaped the Qin regime. /Lord Huang of Xiali 夏黃公 and Qili Ji 綺里季³⁷ went to the Shang Mountain. /This person (I) also said that he would leave.” 嬴氏亂天紀，賢者避其世。黃綺之商山，伊人亦云逝。³⁸ Zhang Dai’s poem follows Tao Qian’s poem. Its first four lines read, “Ying Zheng burned classics and histories, /and the fire in Xianyang was fervent. /All the books are here. /Not a single word is missing.” 嬴氏焚書史，咸陽火正熾。此中有全書，並不遺隻字。³⁹ Early Qing remnant subjects often compare the Qing emperor to Yingzheng, King of Qin, associating the Qing’s brutal invasion of China with the Qin’s annexation of other six states. This is also what Zhang Dai does here.

Zhang Dai’s allusion to Yingzheng’s notorious action of burning histories of the defeated six states and his imagination of the Blessed Land of *Langhuan* as a place where lost and rare books are preserved evoke the cultural devastation caused by the Qing court’s literary inquisition. The official persecution of intellectuals in the early Qing was less systematic than that during the

³⁶ *Zhang Dai shiwenji*, p. 149.

³⁷ Lord Huang of Xiali and Qili Ji were two of four famous hermits, called Four White Haired Gentlemen of the Shang Mountain. They lived in the Shang Mountain to escape the political turmoil at the end of the Qin Dynasty.

³⁸ *Tao Yuanming ji jiaojian*, 6. 403.

³⁹ *Zhang Dai shiwenji*, p. 149.

reigns of the Yongzheng (1723-1735) and the Qianlong (1736-1795) emperors,⁴⁰ but the storm of censorship was brewing. The first major case of literary inquisition of the Qing dynasty, the Ming history case 明史案 (1661-63), also called the Zhuang Tinglong 莊廷鑑 (?-1655) case, involved thousands of people. Zhuang Tinglong was a rich merchant from Zhejiang province, who compiled a history of the Ming dynasty based on *Outline of Ming History* 明史概, written by the late Ming official-scholar Zhu Guozhen 朱國禎 (1557-1632). The book was published posthumously by Zhuang's father in 1660. In 1661, Wu Zhirong 吳之榮, the magistrate of Guian 歸安 County, denounced the book to the authorities on the ground that it defied the legitimacy of the Qing by using the era names of the Ming, calling the Manchus by pejorative names, and violating other taboos. Wu Zhirong also took advantage of the case to bring a false charge against Zhuang's in-law Zhu Youming 朱佑明, a rich merchant who had refused to bribe Wu, accusing Zhu Youming of writing *Gist of Ming History*. The case ended up with Wu's success. Zhuang Tinglong's corpse was disinterred from his grave and destroyed. The families of Zhuang and Zhu were almost exterminated. Anyone related to the book, from editors, publishers, readers, to officials who failed to report it were killed or exiled.

Zhang Dai's awareness of the Ming history case can be found in an entry in his *Talking about the Ancients in the Delightful Garden* 快園道古, a book recording anecdotes of the Ming Dynasty in the style of *A New Account of the Tales of the World* 世說新語. Zhang Dai's book has twenty categories, of which only nine are extant. The entry on the Ming history case is in the fourth category "Speech" 言語, describing Zha Jizuo's 查繼佐 (*hao* Yihuang 伊璜, [1601-1676]) eloquence that exonerated him from suspicion of complicity in the Ming history case.

⁴⁰ See *Qingdai wenziyu dang* 清代文字獄檔 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1986).

Zhuang Tinglong of Huzhou compiled a history of the Ming Dynasty and listed Zha Jizuo as an editor. When Zha knew this, he immediately impeached Zhuang to the education administrator. The administrator dismissed Zha and kept the case in official files. In the seventh month of the next year, when Hu Zirong⁴¹, the magistrate of Guian County, took the printed book and denounced Zhuang to the authorities, Zha was implicated. Zha defended himself, saying “I am a provincial graduate of Hangzhou. Unfortunately I have reputation that I don’t deserve, so Zhuang listed me as an editor of his book. No sooner had I heard of this than I impeached Zhuang in the tenth month of the year Gengzi (1660). Hu Zirong is the magistrate of the county where Zhuang lived. He denounced Zhuang in the seventh month of the year Xinchou (1661). If credit goes to one who first denounced Zhuang, I preceded Hu to denounce Zhuang, so I should take more credit than Hu. If it is a crime to impeach Zhuang late, I impeached Zhuang before Hu, so Hu’s crime is not less than mine. Now Hu has been greatly rewarded for his crime, but I have been sentenced to death. This is indeed to confound right and wrong. I would be grateful if your honorable judges could examine the case closely.” All the government officials thought that Zha’s words made sense. When the case was discussed in the ministry of justice, Zha was actually rehabilitated. Zha and Hu were among those who were rewarded. He got half of Zhuang’s property.

湖州莊龍作明史，以查伊璜刻入校閱姓氏。伊璜知，即檢舉學道，發查存案。次年七月，歸安知縣胡子容持書出首，累及伊璜，伊璜辯曰：“查繼佐系杭州舉人，不幸薄有微名，莊龍遂將繼佐刻入校閱。繼佐一聞，即出檢舉，蓋在庚子十月，胡子容為莊龍本縣父母，其出首在辛丑七月。若以出首早為功，則繼佐前而子容后，繼佐之功當在子容之上；若以檢舉遲為罪，則繼佐早而子容遲，子容之罪不應在繼佐之下。今子容以罪受上賞，而繼佐以功受顯戮，則是非顛倒極矣！諸法臺幸為參詳。”公衙門俱以為查言為是，到部對理，竟得昭雪。遂與胡子容同列賞格，分莊龍籍產之半。⁴²

Though Zha Jizuo did not involve in the compilation of Zhuang Tinglong’s book, Zhuang listed him as an editor due to his fame. Zha was too sophisticated to overlook the danger of being involved in this project, so he impeached Zhuang to the authorities when the book was published in 1660, but the case was not examined. When Wu Zhirong denounced the book in 1661, Zha was implicated, but he successfully defended himself. Zha’s reason was that if Wu was rewarded he should take more credit and that if he committed a crime Wu should be more severely punished since he impeached Zhuang before Wu. Eventually, Zha and Wu each were rewarded with half of Zhuang’s property. Though Zha’s self-defense only resorted to a simple logic, his resourcefulness and rhetorical parallelism won him a place in the category of “Speech” in Zhang

⁴¹ Zhang Dai made a mistake. Hu Zirong must be Wu Zhirong, since Hu and Wu, Zi and Zhi sound similar in *wu* dialect.

⁴² Zhang Dai, *Kuaiyuan daogu* 快園道古 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1985), 4.62-3.

Dai's book. In the preface to the book, Zhang Dai writes that his purpose of recording these anecdotes is to "strengthen one's integrity, broaden one's knowledge, bring out one's intelligence, benefit one's wisdom, move one to take lessons, and enrich one's experience" 堅人之志節, 長人之學問, 發人之聰明, 益人之神智, 動人之鑒戒, 廣人之識見.⁴³ The irony of including Zha's anecdote is that it does fit all the above criteria except the first one, but the knowledge, intelligence, wisdom, lesson, and experience one get from it only reveal how troubled the time was. The anecdote is more a mirror of helplessly misplaced intelligence in the time of troubles than a celebration of intelligence itself. The ultimate lesson and wisdom behind the anecdote is that the importance of clever speech could never be overemphasized, when an ungrounded accusation could become a deadly weapon.

There were other isolated cases of literary inquisition in the early Qing. Manchu forces arrested monk Hanke 函可 (1612-1660) in Nanjing in 1647 because he was discovered to possess politically sensitive documents and a history of the occupation of Nanjing, *The Second Catastrophe* 再變記.⁴⁴ He was exiled to Shenyang 瀋陽 and died there in 1660.⁴⁵ In 1648, the manual of eight-legged essays compiled by Mao Chongzhuo 毛重倬 and others was accused of using the era names of the Ming, and all the editors were imprisoned.⁴⁶ In the same year, Huang Yuqi 黃毓祺 (1579-1648) was denounced as an insurgent, when he was discovered to have an imperial seal of the Ming and a poetry collection that revealed his intention of subverting the

⁴³ *Kuaiyuan daogu*, p. 1.

⁴⁴ See Lawrence C. H. Yim, "Loyalism, Exile, Poetry: Revisiting the Monk Hanke," in *Trauma and Transcendence*, pp. 149-50.

⁴⁵ Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 believes that Hanke's arrest and exile had to do with his attempt to persuade Hong Chengchou 洪承疇 (1593-1665) to participate in secret anti-Qing movement. See *Liu Rushi biezhuàn* 柳如是別傳 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2001), pp. 952-62.

⁴⁶ Hu Qiguang 胡奇光, *Zhongguo wenhuo shi* 中國文禍史 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1993), p. 120.

Qing. Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664) was implicated in this case and barely escaped the sentence.⁴⁷ The magistrate of Changshu County feared that Feng Shu 馮舒 (1593-1649), a renowned poet and scholar, would expose corruption of the local government, accusing Feng of using the era names of the Ming in his preface to the *Collection of Remembrance* 懷舊集 and of insinuating that the Manchus were barbarians by including a couplet “barbarians were drunk with the sound of the *pipa*, not knowing what was played was Chinese music” 胡兒盡向琵琶醉, 不識絃中是漢音 in the collection. Feng was arrested in 1648 and died in the prison one year later.⁴⁸ In 1666, Huang Pei 黃培 (1604-1669), a retired Ming official in Shandong, was accused of slandering the Qing in his *Poetry Collection of the Studio of Hanzhang* 含章館詩集 by people he had unconsciously offended and was eventually sentenced to death by hanging. The case involved over two hundred people, including Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613-1682), who was falsely accused of compiling the anti-Qing collection *Record of Loyalty and Chastity* 忠節錄, a book found in Hang Pei’s residence, by his former enemies. Gu Yanwu was arrested in 1668, but released over half a year later thanks to his self-defense, Huang Pei’s righteous insistence of taking the full responsibility, and the rescue of his nephew Xu Qianxue 徐乾學 (1631-1694), who served in the Qing court then.⁴⁹ A few of these cases such as Hanke’s exile and Huang Yuqi’s death did involve anti-Qing resistance, but most of them were the mingled result of the suspicion of the Qing court, the attempt of local officials to seek rewards, and the morbid jealousy of the victims’ foes. Human frailty takes up the most vicious face when it goes hand in hand with

⁴⁷ The historical documents of Huang’s case and Qian’s implication can be seen in *Liu Rushi biezhuàn*, pp. 900-9.

⁴⁸ Wang Yingkui 王應奎 (1732), *Liunan suibi* 柳南隨筆, vol. 1; Deng Zhicheng 鄧之誠 (1887-1960), *Qingshi jishi chubian* 清詩紀事初編 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1965), 1. 71.

⁴⁹ Zhang Mu 張穆 (1805-1849), *Gu Tingling xiansheng nian pu* 顧亭林先生年譜 (woodblock edition, 1844), pp. 115-24.

political suppression. Zhang Dai's creation of the calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring and a new version of the Peach Blossom Spring, the Blessed Land of *Langhuan*, must be understood against the backdrop of literary inquisition and its cruel twist of human nature in the early Qing. Zhang Dai's Peach Blossom Spring is not simply an idyllic utopia, but a place where free speech and writing is possible, and a place that testifies the vitality of textual space. The fact that he entitles his book *Collection of Langhuan* may also indicate that he desires to have his writing protected from literary inquisition and preserved in a Heaven's library.

Dreams of Books

Cultural devastation caused by literary inquisition could not dampen remnant subjects' writing, but rather intensified their belief in the power of writing. Sima Qian's idea that the frustrated writer completes his "work to be hidden in famous mountains and passed on to like-minded souls" 藏諸名山，傳之其人⁵⁰ underwent a fictional turn in mid and late-seventeenth writing. If Zhang Dai's essays on the Peach Blossom Spring and the Blessed Land of *Langhuan* already show the mixture of lyricism and fictionality, Dong Yue 董說 (1620-1686), who wrote across genres, pushed this trend forward in his record of dreams. I will begin with a fantastic tale in *The Zhaoyang History of Dreams* 昭陽夢史 which deals with the issue of burned books. The title of this tale is "Calling Back the Souls of Books" 招書魂魄.

There was a mountain, with the color of cinnabar. At the foot of the mountain was an old cave, in which thousands of rare birds, with black patterns and emerald crests, were singing. I was surprised to see books of hundreds of volumes at the east corner of the cave. I entered the cave and took the books. On the way I met a Daoist, who asked me about the essence of the books, and I told him that it was emotion.⁵¹ He said, "These were what you copied—why did

⁵⁰ *Quan Han wen* 全漢文, 26. 9, translation from Wai-ye Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment*, p. 166.

⁵¹ There is an alternative way of reading the Chinese original. "On the way I met a Daoist, who asked me about the origins of the books, and I told him the truth."

you then take them for yourself?” Hearing this, I opened the books, and saw that there wasn’t a single word in it. He said, “These books had been burned to ashes, how could there be any word left? The birds in the cave are the souls of the books. Try to wail, and you will call back the souls of the books.” I followed his instruction to wail, and the mysterious birds all fled to different directions and cried sadly, but eventually they stayed in the cave and didn’t come to me. Thus I threw away the wordless books.

有山，色如丹砂，其下有古穴，穴中奇鳥千，玄文翠冠，其鳴有章。見書數百卷，在穴東隅，驚奇之。入穴，抱書而去。道遇禪客，問書根本，余以情對。禪客曰：“即君手錄，何乃自收。”余聞言開卷，蕩然無一文字。客曰：“此書已焚灰，安得有字。穴中鳥，書魂魄也。君試慟哭，書魂可招來。”余法言，慟哭，奇鳥各飛，鳴悽愴，止穴不來。余遂棄無字書也。⁵²

The Zhaoyang History of Dreams is a book that records Dong Yue’s dreams. *Zhaoyang* refers to *gui* 癸, the last one of the ten Heavenly Stems. The ten Heaven Stems are used as serial numbers in combination with the twelve Earthly Branches to designate years, months, days, and hours. Since *gui* is the last Heavenly Stem, it is believed to predict the emergence of the Yang air, sunlight, warmth, and life in ancient Chinese astronomy,⁵³ hence the name *zhaoyang*. The year of *Zhaoyang* is the year of *guiwei* 癸未 (1643). Since Dong Yue finished the book in 1643, one year before the fall of the Ming, his imagination of calling back the souls of books not only expresses his lamentation over the tragic fate of writers and books in Chinese history, but also reflects the political turmoil of the Ming-Qing transition. The theme of calling back the soul can be traced back to the *Chuci* 楚辭. In “Calling Back the Soul” 招魂, the shaman warns Qu Yuan’s 屈原 soul⁵⁴ against the dangers of distant regions and tells the soul to return. At the end of “Calling Back the Soul” are beautiful lines that call the soul to return to its home, “The eye travels on a thousand *li*, and the heart breaks for sorrow. O soul, come back! Alas for the Southern Land!” 目

⁵² Quoted in Zhao Hongjuan 趙紅娟, *Ming yimin Dong Yue yanjiu* 明遺民董說研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2006), p. 404.

⁵³ *Huainanzi*, vol.3, “Tianwenxun” 天文訓.

⁵⁴ It is open to debate whose soul is summoned. Some think that the soul of a king of Chu is summoned. David Hawkes, *The Songs of the South* (Penguin Books, 1985), p. 222-3.

極千里兮傷春心，魂兮歸來哀江南。⁵⁵ The lyrical end of “Calling Back the Soul” establishes the trope of “return” in later texts, not the shamanistic ritual of the soul’s return, but the writer’s return to his spiritual home, as most typically represented in Tao Qian’s essay, “O Come Back Home” 歸去來辭.

Dong Yue’s dream/tale is an unprecedented innovation of the tradition of “calling back the soul,” by combining the magical origin of “calling back the soul” with lyrical lamentation over the souls of books and writers. The fantastic imagination of the tale puts it on a par with the best *chuanqi* tales before Dong Yue’s time. The setting of the tale is an old cave, where Dong Yue found massive tomes and mysterious birds. He took the books and told a Daoist he met on the way that the essence of these books was emotion. When he opened the books, he was surprised to see that they were empty. The Daoist told him that the books had been burned and the birds in the cave were the souls of the burned books. The Daoist also taught him to wail to call back the souls of the books. When he did so, the birds flew away and cried sadly, but eventually they returned to the cave. Dong Yue threw away the books in the end. Dong Yue’s imagination of a cave of books must be inspired by the legend of the Dayou 大酉 Mountain and the Xiaoyou 小酉 Mountain, given his reference to the two mountains in his writing.⁵⁶ Like the Blessed Land of *Langhuan*, the two mountains are places where books are preserved. It is said that King Mu of Zhou left thousands of volumes of books in the caves of two mountains.⁵⁷ Dong Yue’s tale

⁵⁵ Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 (1090-1155), *Chuci buzhu* 楚辭補註, p. 215, David Hawkes’ translation, *The Songs of the South*, p. 230.

⁵⁶ He refers to the two mountains in “Inviting Submissions of Dreams” 徵夢篇, *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses* 豐草庵文前集, 2. 13-14.

⁵⁷ *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 only mentions the cave of the Xiaoyou Mountain, vol. 49 p. 5. Hu Yinglin 胡應麟 points out that the Dayou and Xiaoyou are legendary mountains where King Mu of Zhou is said to collect books, and that they should not be identified with the mountains of the same name in Hunan province, see “Eryou zhuyi” 二酉綴遺, in *Shaoshi shanfang bicong* 少室山房筆叢, p. 164.

breathes new life to the common legend of secret libraries by conflating the souls of the books with the souls of their writers. The transference from human souls to the souls of books attributes spirituality to books, whereas the objectification of the souls of books into birds attributes corporeality to books. Thus books are not just the extension or the metonymy of their writers, but are identified with their writers. If the cuckoo's heartbreaking cry makes it a conventional symbol of the soul of people with endless sorrow, Dong Yue makes the mysterious birds in the cave a symbol of the soul of writers who have to destroy their books or have their books destroyed. The birds, the soul of suppressed writing and burnt books, can only hide in the cave. The analogy between the bird and the writer is often found in literary texts. One of the most influential piece in this tradition is Han Yu's "The Pair of Birds" 雙鳥詩. In this poem, two birds sing so well that they put all other birds to shame, but their endless singing disturbs the order of cosmos, so Heaven forbids them to sing. If Han Yu's poem playfully suggests that the most talented poets suffer from jealousy and persecution, Dong Yue's tale laments censorship and self-censorship imposed on writers in a magical way.

Dong Yue's description of burned books evokes a handful of stories that involve the burning of books written by heretical literati and talented women of the late Ming. Dong Yue's answer to the Daoist that the essence of the burned books is emotion also echoes the cult of passion of the late Ming. The idea of writings rescued from burning was used for both male and female writers of the late Ming. Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602), the principal exponent of individualistic thought in the late Ming, published *A Book to Burn* 焚書 in 1590, suggesting its dangerous content in this title. The posthumous collection of legendary Xiaoqing 小青 (d. early 17th century) is titled *Manuscripts Saved from Burning* 焚余草. According to Hu Wenkai's 胡文楷 (1899-1988) *Research on Women's Writings through the Ages* 歷代婦女著作考, a great number of late Ming

collections use nearly identical titles or variations on the idea, implying obstacles female writers met on their way of pursuing literary fame and the rhetorical strategy they used to overcome the obstacles.⁵⁸

The sad cry of the mysterious birds in Dong Yue's dream also seems to predict what would happen in Dong Yue's own life. He burned his writing three times, in 1643, 1646, and 1656 respectively. In 1643, he burned all the prose written before 1640. In "Sequel to Journey in Sickness" 續病游記, an essay written in 1645, he recorded a dream in which he wrote "Inscription on the Rack of Brushes" 筆床銘. The inscription suggests his plan to stop writing. "Alas, my brushes, I don't want to burn you, but may you sleep here forever." 嗟, 女筆, 吾不焚女, 女其長寢于此.⁵⁹ In 1646, he burned all the formal prose and a volume of poetry written in 1644 and 1645. Intending to become a monk in 1656, he wrote "Oath of Burning the Ink Stone" 焚研誓辭 and burned a volume of prose written in 1645 and a volume of poetry written in 1646.⁶⁰ If late Ming writers' gesture of burning books suggested the suppression of orthodox Confucianism and their challenge to it, Dong Yue burned his volumes as a way of renouncing society and political order. Dong Yue's preface to his poetry collection, written in 1656, explains that the death of many of his friends led to his withdrawal from society. "Half of my old friends have died. I have sat in my studio sadly, not writing any letter to my friends in the last ten years. In this world people who know me are fewer and fewer." 我故舊半死生矣, 我愁坐一室中, 絕往來

⁵⁸ See Ellen Widmer, "Xiaoqing's Literary Legacy and the Place of the Woman Writer in Late Imperial China," in *Late Imperial China*, vol. 13, number 1, June 1992, p. 132.

⁵⁹ "Sequel to Journey in Sickness," *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*, 3. 16.

⁶⁰ Dong Yue, "Preface to the *Poetry Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*," in *Poetry Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses* 1.1; *Qingshi jishi chubian*, 2. 266.

尺牘十年矣，世漸無知我者。⁶¹ The death of his friends in the past ten years must have involved political chaos during the dynastic transition. In 1657, Dong Yue took the tonsure in the Lingyan 靈岩 Mountain, a base of underground anti-Qing resistance in the southeast coastal area, and began to study Buddhism with the monk Hongchu 弘儲, who devoted himself to Buddhist learning while still embracing loyalty and filial piety.⁶² The fact that the souls of the burned books return to the reclusive cave seems to correspond to Dong Yue's own choice of living as a hermit for the last twenty years of his life.

Another dream about books in Dong Yue's writing can further help us understand the meaning of the souls of burned books. In a companion poem to a monk Shaoyuan's 劬圓 (1607-?) poem that commemorates Xu Qian 徐汧 (?-1645), a Ming loyalist who committed suicide when his hometown Suzhou fell to the Qing, Dong Yue mentions his dream of a cave where books about ministers of moral integrity are stored. In the note after the first line of this poem, "The flower⁶³ of the stone stacks recalls me to the rugged emerald" 石庫英華憶碧岫, Dong Yue explains that the "rugged emerald" is the name of the cave in his dream and the books in the stone stacks near the "rugged emerald" are about loyalty and filial piety.

Fifteen years ago I dreamed of being in a cave. It had a stele that read "Rugged Emerald." Next to the cave were stone stacks. All the books were about moral integrity of ministers from antiquity to the present.

十五年前夢至一洞天，額曰“碧岫”，邊有石庫藏書，書皆述古今臣節。⁶⁴

⁶¹ "Preface to the *Poetry Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*," in *Poetry Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses* 1.1

⁶² See *Ming yimin Dong Yue yanjiu*, p. 76-7.

⁶³ The flower alludes to books, following *The Flower of the Garden of Letters* 文苑英華, which is the most important source for Tang and Five Dynasties writing.

⁶⁴ *Poetry Collection of Precious Clouds* 寶雲詩集, 1.2.

The second line of the poem, “Every line in the writing that involves loyalty and filial piety is especially respectful” 文關忠孝句偏尊, suggests Dong Yue’s admiration of loyalists like Xu Qian. The poem ends with Dong Yue’s statement of his own loyalty: “My way always follows Confucian moral principles” 吾道從來本大倫. The “rugged emerald” alludes to the story of an ancient loyal minister’s blood turning into emerald. “Changhong died in Shu, where the people stored away his blood, and after three years it was transformed into emerald” 萇弘死於蜀, 藏其血三年而化為碧.⁶⁵ The analogy between the martyr’s blood that is stored away and transformed into emerald and books about loyalists that are stored in the “rugged emerald” is obvious. The political connotations of emerald are also echoed in the emerald crests of the mysterious birds in “Calling Back the Souls of Books”. Emerald crests symbolize the association between the souls of burned books and loyalists who devote their lives to the country. Thus Dong Yue’s statement that the essence of the books is emotion goes beyond the late Ming cult of passion, suggesting loyalists’ commitment to the cause of protecting the homeland. The mysterious birds symbolize the heroic souls of loyalists and the burned books record their loyalism. The birds evoke the souls of soldiers who die in protecting their state in “The Kingdom’s Dead” 國殤, another piece from *Chuci*, “our bodies are dead, /our souls are now gods, /among ghosts, the stalwart, /heroes among the wraiths.” 身既死兮神以靈, 子魂魄兮為鬼雄.⁶⁶

Another entry, “It Rained Words” 天雨字, in *The Zhaoyang History of Dreams* tells a related story of books and writing.

⁶⁵ *Zhuangzi jishi*, “Wai wu,” 26. 920.

⁶⁶ *Chuci buzhu*, p. 83, Stephen Owen’s translation.

It rained words which were like snowflakes and gradually looked like black palms. I murmured to myself, “Since the world existed,⁶⁷ no one has seen such evil spirits.” When I took the yarrow (the grass of divination) to ask *fu*xi about this, a man who wore a high hat and a white garment ran away, shouting, “What a marvel, what a marvel! It rained words today, and these words make a piece of ‘O, Come Back Home.’”

天雨字，如雪花，漸如掌，而色黑。余心語曰：“天地開鑿，此妖孽未有。”將著問羲皇，有男子高冠白衣，大奔走，呼曰：“大奇觀，大奇觀！今日天雨字，乃一篇歸去來兮辭也。”⁶⁸

In a famous legend that explains the mysterious origin of Chinese language, it is said that when Cangjie 倉頡 invented words it rained millets and ghosts began to cry. The message conveyed by the legend is that the invention of words predicts the rise of hypocrisy and dishonesty, and as a result the focus of human life will shift from agriculture to war and human beings will suffer from famine.⁶⁹ Dong Yue’s dream of words falling from the sky is certainly inspired by the legend, but it should also be read as a parallel of “Calling Back the Souls of Books.” “Calling Back the Souls of Books” shows the souls of burned books, but the words in them are nowhere to be found. In “It Rained Words,” the words that are detached from the books fall from the sky. The man who wears a high hat and a white garment is obviously Qu Yuan, and what he reads from the words is exactly “O, Come Back Home,” Tao Qian’s essay that calls the soul of the writer to go back home.

Dong Yue’s three dreams reveal his imagination of the relationship between writing and fictional space. Unlike the Blessed Land of *Langhuan*, an idealized library, the cave in “Calling Back the Souls of Books” and the “rugged emerald” are places that witness the hardships borne by writers and preserve the memory of trauma. They are the ruins of books. In this sense, Dong

⁶⁷ The Chinese original literally means that “since the sky and earth were carved.”

⁶⁸ Quoted in *Ming yimin Dong Yue yanjiu*, p. 193.

⁶⁹ *Huainanzi*, vol. 8, Gao You’s 高誘 (3rd century) comment.

Yue's dreams and writings about these dreams interpret the idea of "ruins" from a new perspective.

Dreaming as Writing

Many dreams recorded in Dong Yue's *The Zhaoyang History of Dreams* involve the portrayal of fictional space. For example, an entry titled "Cloud Gate" 雲門 describes a realm hidden behind a mysterious gate, evoking Zhang Dai's description of the Blessed Land of *Langhuan*. "At the depth were some old cottages with clouds as their gates. When guests came, the clouds opened. When guests left, the clouds closed as before." 幽深處老屋數椽, 白雲為門, 客至雲開, 客去雲封如故.⁷⁰ Roughly at the same time when Dong Yue collected dreams in *The Zhaoyang History of Dreams*, he wrote three essays to explicate his theory of dreams, "Treatise on the Dreamlands" 夢鄉志, "Rules for the Dream Society" 夢社約, and "Inviting Submissions of Dreams" 徵夢篇, all included in the second volume of his essay collection *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses* 豐草庵文前集.⁷¹ These essays reveal two features of his dreams and writing about dreams. He conceives of dreams as a way to explore fictional space and dreaming as a form of writing.

All three essays celebrate the power of writing in redefining time and space. In "Treatise on the Dreamlands," written in 1643, Dong Yue emphasizes the exploration of fictional space in dreams by delineating seven dreamlands.

Since frustrated gentlemen in China all returned to the dreamland, people in the dreamland haven't had bodies, nor have they had flapped wings, but they have been flying like immortals. Following the way of the dreamland, they crossed westward the sea of hardship, climbed the

⁷⁰ *Ming yimin Dong Yue yanjiu*, p. 404.

⁷¹ In *Congshu jicheng xubian* 叢書集成續編, (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1995), vol. 122.

ethereal terrace, and gazed at India. This is called the shortcut of achieving the sandalwood.⁷² However, those who lost the way mistakenly found the divergent road. They detoured in hundreds of steps and entered Hades, also called the country of ghosts, and would no longer see the sun, moon and stars. When Yao rode the blue dragon to climb the mountain, Shun beat the drum. At that time the dreamland was as respected as the five mountains. When emperors went on seasonal inspection tours, each one of them left a lot of traces of illusion that was recorded in poems and documents. The name dreamland establishes the great principles.⁷³ There are seven dreamlands, just as China has nine states. The first one is called the land of the supernatural, where birds wear hats and beasts wear belts,⁷⁴ grasses fly and trees walk, and people have horns and fish-like bodies. The second one is called the land of mountains and rivers, where high mountains and great rivers exist. The third one is called the land of the underworld, where all spirits live. The fourth one is called the land of consciousness, where cities of feelings and city walls of thoughts are made of meditation. The fifth one is called as-one-wishes land, where you can find high terraces and winding rooms, gold, jade, precious pearls, colorful jadeites, mysterious birds and beasts, beauties, clocks and drums, crowns and apparels, poems and documents that escaped fire, priceless playthings and secret constructions⁷⁵, and everyone can do as he wishes. The sixth one is called the land of the past, where bygone events belong. The seventh one is called the land of future, where one knows what will happen and can travel afar without divination. Since you have roamed around in the dreamland, in three years you can be a scribe to be in charge of its politics, and to purify the realm of seven lands with the help of eight assistants. The first one of eight assistants is the medicine furnace; the second is the tripod caldron for tea; the third is the storied house; the fourth is the Daoist classic; the fifth is the stone pillow; the sixth is the fragrant seal; the seventh is the secluded flower; the eighth is chill rain. You can have four departments to issue books of seven lands. The first is the official in charge of dreams, taken by a young boy; the second is the orchid terrace where dreams are stored. The terrace is square with one foot high; the third is *Mirror of Dreams*, in which the dates of dreams must be recorded given to the official in charge of dreams; the fourth is the dream society, where friends get together and travel in company.

The unofficial scribe says that Su Shi of Mount Mei wrote the account of the land of sleep. The account says that the land of sleep is flat and broad, without four directions. It also says that people there don't have feelings, don't deal with worldly affairs, and they are so carefree that they don't see the sky, earth, sun and moon. Their sleep is indeed dumb. When I roamed in the land of sleep in my youth, I was so bored that I left it to roam in the dreamland, and therefore I know the difference between two lands quite well. The land of sleep shields the dreamland in the front, and indeed it is the shelter of the dreamland. The sea of chaos is in between, which is neither cold nor hot. If you cross the sea and go forward, in a moment you will be on the "road of getting lost", and then you will walk on the way of the dreamland. The

⁷² The sculptures of Buddha are made of sandalwood, so achieving sandalwood means to achieve Buddhist enlightenment.

⁷³ This is an allusion to *Xunzi* 荀子, "Quanyue" 勸學. It literally means to raise the fur collar (and comb through it with five fingers).

⁷⁴ Hats and belts are metonymys for official ranks, ritual, and cultivation.

⁷⁵ "Secret constructions" is a Daoist term.

land of sleep is before the land of dream and the land of dream is after the land of sleep. Su Shi imitated Zhuangzi, but misguided visitors of the dreamland. This is a bad example of following antiquity. How could he take the vivid dream of the butterfly as an authentic account of the land of sleep?

自中國愁苦達士皆歸夢鄉，夢鄉之人無形骸，不鼓羽，而飛類仙也。遵夢鄉，西渡苦海，登靈台，望天竺國，號旃檀捷徑。然迷者誤尋枝道，周旋數百步，入泉曲之府，是名鬼國，不復見日月星斗矣。陶唐氏騎青龍登山，舜擊雷鼓。當是時，夢鄉尊並五嶽。天子時巡狩，歷代多有幻跡，文在詩書。夢鄉之名挈裘領，而為鄉者七，如中國九州。一曰玄怪鄉，此鄉鳥冠獸帶，草飛樹走，有人角而魚身。二曰山水鄉，是有崇山大川。三曰冥鄉，是鄉也，岱遊之魂皆在焉。四曰識鄉，其中有情城思郭，凝想所造。五曰如意鄉，高臺曲房，金玉寶珠，五彩翡翠，奇禽異獸，美人，鐘鼓，冕服，未焚詩書，希玩秘邁，人人各如其意。六曰藏往鄉，舊事屬焉。七曰未來鄉，是可以知來，使人不卦遠遊。子既游夢鄉，三年為太史，管其國政，以八佐清七鄉之境。一曰藥鑪，二曰茶鼎，三曰樓居，四曰道書，五曰石枕，六曰香篆，七曰幽花，八曰寒雨。以四科領七鄉之書。一曰司夢吏，一童子職之。二曰藏夢蘭台，其台也，高一尺而矩。三曰夢鑑，甲子必述，以授司吏。四曰夢社，結朋同遊。

野史氏曰眉山蘇子瞻作睡鄉記。其曰土地平夷廣大，無東西南北是也。複云不生七情，不交萬事，蕩然不見天地日月。其睡鈍矣。余少遊睡鄉，厭而為夢鄉之遊，故二鄉之間明辨。睡鄉前蔽，實夢鄉之屏障，有混沌海，不寒不暑，濟此海屈申，臂頃抵迷家路，遂行夢鄉道上，睡前而夢後。今子瞻憲章漆園吏，誤引夢客。此述古之濫。蝴蝶栩栩，豈睡鄉實錄哉。⁷⁶

Dong Yue is an erudite scholar. His learning spans the Chinese classics, ancient Chinese history, literary history, Buddhism, and Daoism, among other things. Buddhist and Daoist discourse certainly plays an important role in his construction of dreamlands, but here I want to focus on the relationship between his dreamlands and literary history. As Dong Yue points out at the end of the account, it responds to Su Shi's 蘇軾 (1037-1101) "Account of the Land of Sleep" 睡鄉記.⁷⁷

The politics of the land of sleep is honest. Its custom is fair. Its land is flat and broad without four directions. Its people are peaceful and comfortable, not bothered by illness or plague. They are in a daze, exempt from seven sentiments (happiness, anger, grief, fear, love, resentment, desire). They are in a complete darkness, not dealing with anything. They are utterly ignorant, not knowing there are the sky, earth, sun, and moon. Not weaving silk or growing grains, they are satisfied to easily lie down. Taking no boat or carriage, they travel afar at their desire. They wear clothes made of fine cloth in winter and clothes made of cotton fiber in summer, not knowing the difference between cold and hot weather. They are sad

⁷⁶ *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*, 2.12-13.

⁷⁷ *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), vol. 11, pp. 372-3.

when profit but happy when having a loss, not knowing the difference between advantage and disadvantage. ...

其政甚醇, 其俗甚均, 其土平夷廣大, 無東西南北, 其人安恬舒適, 無疾痛札癘, 昏然不生七情, 茫然不交萬事, 蕩然不知天地日月, 不絲不穀, 佚臥而自足, 不舟不車, 極意而遠遊, 冬而絺夏而纈, 不知其有寒暑, 得而悲失而喜, 不知其有利害.

In Su Shi's essay, the land of sleep is an ancient Daoist utopia that declines during the Warring States period when everyone's mind is possessed by war. The originality of this essay is not in its portrayal of a place beyond Confucianism and politics, given Tao Qian's earlier creation of the Peach Blossom Spring and a lot of imitative works, but in its imaginative transformation of sleep, a temporal existence, into space. Sleep becomes a country of flat and broad land, where people are just like sleepers, calm, relaxed, vacant, and traveling afar at their desire without the help of vehicles. Su Shi also incorporates the story of Zhuangzi becoming a butterfly in a dream into his creation of the land of sleep, saying that Zhuangzi visits the land of sleep by becoming a butterfly and that the land of sleep is often visited by recluses who admire Dao. Dong Yue's portrayal of seven dreamlands is obviously influenced by Su Shi's essay. In Su Shi's imagination, sleep is dreamless, like a country made of boulevards, but Dong Yue takes sleep as the shelter of dreams and perceives the dreamland to be a space full of divergent roads and forking paths. Divergent roads and forking paths seduce dreamers to depart from the boulevard of sleep, sometimes leading them astray, but sometimes leading them to enlightenment. Dreams open the door to a virtual world, which is divided into seven lands just as ancient China has nine states. The first is the land of the supernatural, where animals and plants are personified whereas humans take on features of animals. The second is the land of great landscape. The third is the underworld. The fourth is the land of cognition, where everything is built by meditation. The fifth is the land where treasures are preserved and everyone is content. The sixth is the land of the past, where bygone events are remembered. The seventh is the land of future, where one knows what will happen. The fact that Dong Yue conceives dreams as spiritual journeys to

fictional space indicates his debt to Chinese traditional poetics. In “The Poetic Exposition on Literature” 文賦, Lu Ji 陸機 (261-303) describes the reflective process before writing in this way, “My essence galloping to the world’s eight bounds, /my mind roaming ten thousand yards, up and down”⁷⁸ 精驚八極, 心遊萬仞. The idea is developed by Liu Xie 劉勰 (ca. 465-520) in the chapter “Spirit Thought” 神思 from *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍. “When we silently focus our concerns, thought may reach to a thousand years in the past.”⁷⁹ 寂然凝慮, 思接千載. Thus, not only does Dong Yue write about dreams, but dreaming is also a way of writing for him. Indeed, Dong Yue compares his dreamlands to various poets’ poems. In an essay, written between 1646 and 1650, he writes, “The dreamlands are broad. If I make an analogy between my dreams and poetry, my dreams before the year of Gengchen (1640) are like Changji’s (Li He 李賀 [790-816]) poems; my dreams in the year of Xinsi (1641) are like Taibai’s (Li Bai 李白 [701-762]) poems; my dreams in the year of Guiwei (1643) are like Shaoling’s (杜甫 [712-770]) poems; my dreams in recent years are like Mojie’s (王維 [701-761]) poems.” 夢鄉廣大, 譬諸詩, 我庚辰以前諸夢, 長吉也;辛巳諸夢,太白也;癸未諸夢,少陵也;近年諸夢,摩詰也。⁸⁰

The key idea of “Treatise on the Dreamlands” is that the dreamland is a counterpart of the world we live in and that it offers an alternative way of existence. Just as each imperial dynasty has its history, the dreamland has *Mirror of Dreams*, named after the chronological history *Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government* 資治通鑑 compiled by the great historian Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086). In “Rules for the Dream Society,” Dong Yue continues the idea of compiling a chronicle of dreams and calls himself “the historian of dreams” 夢史, a title modeled

⁷⁸ Translation is from Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 96.

⁷⁹ Translation is from *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 202.

⁸⁰ *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*, 4. 11.

on Sima Qian's "the grand historian" 太史公. In this essay, Dong Yue summarizes seven dreamlands into four types of dreams, the dream beyond the world, the dream of far-off journey, the dream of the past, and the dream of future.

Mr. Dong says that dreams are great. If there had been no dreams, the world between the sky and earth would have been too plain. How sad would that be! The way of dreams seems to be easy. Dreams are one thing people who enjoy wealth, comfort and peace do not seek, whereas people who live in poverty, inferiority, sadness and the chaotic world make sacrifices to pursue. Wealthy people lose their wealth if they have dreams of poverty; people who enjoy great comfort and leisure lose comfort and leisure if they have sad dreams; people who live in peaceful time lose peace if they have dreams of the chaotic world. It is appropriate for those in poverty, inferiority, sadness and the chaotic world to have dreams. If there are people who want to follow me, I can let them feel content and leave this world. I have four rules for friends who accompany me to have dreams. We straddle the sun and moon and talk to Heaven. Thousands of clouds flow below us. We fly like dragons and fish amidst immortals and spirits, or grasp stars in our hands. The king of India is in front of us, and we are in the precious pond of lotus flowers⁸¹. This is the dream beyond the world, the highest type of dreams in the department of dreams. The second type is far-off journey. The road is dangerous and difficult, but we cross thousands of miles in a moment and see five mountains clearly. Mysterious communion also happens in this type of dream. Sometimes when we fix our attention on antiquity, suddenly our spirits arrive either in the Han and Tang or the Shang and Zhou. Once I dreamed of becoming a general on an expedition to the south in the Jin Dynasty (265-420), and seeing the King Zhao of the Yan state sitting on the deer terrace⁸² with majestic attendants. Sometimes when things have left, their souls are retained, and when time has changed, images of the past still remain, resembling what has happened. Dreams of this kind preserve the past. Also, there are dreams in which we meet people who wear white apparels and white mourning dress, climb on the numinous terrace⁸³ to look at the future, and hang the precious mirror to illuminate the invisible.⁸⁴ This is the dream that knows what will happen in future. All my associates must know the rules of dreams respectfully and carefully. In the next morning after you have a dream, you should write it down without skepticism. When you write it on paper, do not cheat yourselves, do not mix it with trivial things such as rice and salt, and be specific of dates. Please send your dreams to the scribe of dreams on the bank of the Xun River and let him store them. In several years, I'll collect all the dreams, divide them into a hundred scrolls

⁸¹ The lotus pond made of seven treasures is a divine place in Pure Land Buddhism.

⁸² The general may refer to Yang Hu 羊祜 (221-278), who was titled the "Great General on an Expedition to the South" 征南大將軍. The deer terrace is said to be the place where the King Zhou of the Shang Dynasty commit suicide.

⁸³ It is a place for emperors to observe astronomical phenomena.

⁸⁴ The precious mirror refers to the mirror of retribution, in which one's former deeds are reflected when one is judged in the underworld. See "a treachery-reflecting water mirror" in Dong Yue's novel *A Supplement to Journey to the West*, chapter 9.

by the four categories, and name the collection *Mirror of Dreams*. In the thousands of years to come, please make sacrifices to me in the dreamland.

董子曰大哉夢乎。假使古來無夢，天地之內甚平凡而不奇，豈不悲哉。夢之道似易。夢者，富貴大逸樂太平之人所不願，貧賤憂愁亂世之人所祭祀而求者也。富貴之人，貧賤夢則喪其富貴，大逸樂之人，憂愁夢則喪其逸樂，太平之人，亂世夢則喪其太平。貧賤宜夢，憂愁宜夢，亂世宜夢。有從我遊者，我能使得意去今。與夢友約夢法四章。騎日月而與天語，萬雲下流，蛟龍如魚，身位仙靈，或掌星斗，梵王當前，蓮華寶池為出世夢，夢部第一。次曰遠遊，懸車束馬，一刻萬里。五嶽周觀，亦冥通之選。或古想堅凝，忽然神到漢唐，或在商周。余嘗夢為晉征南將軍。又見燕昭王坐鹿臺上，儀衛精嚴是也。或物換魂留，時移象在，仿佛過去之事。夢若此者，皆為藏往。亦有將會白衣霜傳縞素，法當震恐，雷告驚奇，登靈台而望後日，懸寶鏡而炤無形，此曰知來之夢。凡我同盟，咸聞科條，必敬必戒，夢之明旦，筆記勿疑。寫以尺紙，勿妄自欺，無凌雜米鹽，干支必詳。寄于潯水之濱，夢史藏之，數年之後，聚斂其夢，四科從類，析為百卷，題曰夢鑑，千秋萬歲，俎豆我于夢鄉。⁸⁵

The dream beyond the world and the dream of far-off journey involve creating fictional space, whereas the dream of the past and the dream of future involve creating fictional time. Dong Yue defines dreams to be something about the exploration of supernatural realm, idealized realm, memory, and prophesy. This definition makes dreams a way of rejecting here and now. His depiction of these dreams, such as “straddling the sun and moon and talking to Heaven,” invokes the perfect man’s 至人 spiritual journeys in *Zhuangzi*.

A man like this rides the clouds and mist, straddles the sun and moon, and wanders beyond the four seas. Even life and death have no effect on him, much less the rules of profit and loss! 若然者，乘雲氣，騎日月，而游乎四海之外。死生無變於己，而況利害之端乎！⁸⁶

The perfect man’s transcendence beyond the world, represented in their indifference to life and death, profit and loss, resonates with Dong Yue’s description of perfect dreamers, who are socially alienated, treated unfairly, dissatisfied with reality, or live in chaotic time. Dreaming is both a compensation for their frustration and a fruit of their pain. Thus he makes an analogy between the traditional poetics that claims that frustrated writers create great writings and his idea that great dreams and dreamers come from poverty, suffering, and chaotic time.

⁸⁵ *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*, 2. 15-16.

⁸⁶ “Qi wu lun” 齊物論, in *Zhuangzi jishi*, 2.96, Burton Watson’s translation.

Following the same logic, Dong Yue describes dreaming as a way of returning to the spiritual home for men of letters who suffer from censorship or whose writing is not appreciated in the world in “Inviting Submissions of Dreams.” Two essays above already conceive dreaming as a way of writing, and here Dong Yue points out that dreaming is an alternative way of writing for those who are deprived of the right of writing. He deplores that the writings of men of letters face adversity, echoing his portrayal of the souls of burned books.

At the east riverside, I take the ground as the mattress and the sky as the curtain to explore the great world of fantasy. I take my carriage as the quilt and my horse as the pillow to have free and easy wandering, and immediately I arrive in towers and terraces. This is called armchair travels, which allow me to observe in the darkness.⁸⁷ Yu the Great chiseled the sky and earth with his axe, but where is the vast sea of dreams? Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty sealed famous mountains, but it is hard to seek the dim city of night. I am the sad minister of Yue and scribe of dreams at Stream Tiao. ... I have no luck in fortune and wealth. I have awakened to the fact that high official are the same as jailers. Men of letters are in distress, and I don't covet to be a prisoner in my homeland. I should leave, since the human world is not a place to stay for long.

東臯席地帷天，開闢大荒之世界。衾車枕馬逍遙，頃刻之樓臺，名曰臥遊，茲為玄覽。夏禹氏斧鑿乾坤，夢海蒼茫何處。漢武帝泥封岳鎮，夜城縹緲難求。越國愁臣，苕溪夢史 福祿無緣，悟得衣冠皆獄吏。文章多厄，不貪鄉國大羈囚。歸去來，人間不可以久居。⁸⁸

He invokes Lu Ji's term “observing in darkness” 玄覽 from “The Poetic Exposition on Literature” to describe the connection between the spiritual experience of writing and the unfathomed depth of frustrated writers' dreams. In his beautiful imagination of dreaming and writing, writing is both real and illusory.

I write the book of the butterfly on white silk made of the sunlight at dawn, seal it in the book case guarded by dragons, and let it float in Lake Tai.

字成蝴蝶之書，寫用霞光之練，封以蛟龍之笈，浮於震澤之洲。

⁸⁷ This is a reference to Lu Ji's “The Poetic Exposition on Literature,” “He stands in the very center, /observes in the darkness” 佇中區以玄覽. “Observing in the darkness” is a term of spiritual experience and becomes the model for operations of the literary imagination. See *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 88.

⁸⁸ *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*, 2. 13-14.

“The butterfly” alludes to the story of Zhuangzi’s dream of becoming a butterfly. “Writing the book of the butterfly” may simply mean writing about dreams, but since this book is written “on white silk made of the sunlight at dawn,” an air of illusion is attributed to writing, and writing the book of the butterfly is almost like a dream. “Sealing it in the book case guarded by dragons and let it float in Lake Tai” further makes the book of the butterfly more of a magical book of the cosmos than a real book of the human world. He imagines collecting the books of the butterfly and making them into the calendar of dreams. Just as Zhang Dai’s calendar of the Peach Blossom Spring suggests his desire of being free of the imperial order, Dong Yue’s calendar of dreams signifies his attempt to transcend the imperial order by creating an alternative order in the dreamland.

Once the calendar of dreams is done, I will carve it on a piece of jade. Beyond the blue sky and the yellow earth, I start to establish an immortal palace and an orchid terrace. Inside the stone chamber, fantastic valleys stand out. The Peach Blossom Spring is far away, but it is immortalized in books and historical records. Mirage disappears soon, but it lasts forever in paintings.

夢歷初成，鏤諸玉版。碧天黃土之外，草創靈宮蘭臺。石室之中，孤標幻嶺。桃源杳杳，圖史千秋，海市飄飄，丹青萬古。

The dreamland is Dong Yu’s version of the Peach Blossom Spring. Like Zhang Dai’s Blessed Land of *Langhuan*, the dreamland is not just an idyllic utopia, but a library where socially alienated writers’ writings about dreams are preserved. The inspiration of their writings comes from dreams, and dreams are in turn immortalized by writings.

Realm and Mirror

In a slightly later essay, “Dreams as Herbs” 夢本草, written sometime between 1643 and 1645, Dong Yue entitles the dreamland as realm 境, further associating dreaming with Chinese poetics.

The smell of dreams is sweet and the nature of dreams is mellow. They are nontoxic. They benefit one’s wits, smooth blood vessels, remove vexation, purify one’s mind and let one keep

a distance from vulgarity, and lengthen ones' life span. The herbs are produced in five places, but the best are produced in two places. One grows in the secluded realm of landscape, and the other grows in the realm of the supernatural. Both contribute to curing illness caused by the dusty world. What is produced in the realm of the past is named the lingering dream. Eating it makes one remember what once existed. What is produced in the realm of future is named the herb of knowing future. Now all those who are fond of dreaming praise this herb, however, because it easily makes one vulgar, and could also increase worries. It is not a good herb and those who pick up dreams don't value it. The last type is produced in the land of surprise, also called the realm of surprise. Dreaming this can lift one beyond lethargy, but it also makes one crazy. Wise people cure illness with good dreams. Making them does not depend on water or fire, and once you close your eyes you can make them. Those who pick up the herbs don't ask whether it is winter or spring, summer or autumn, but they always make them at night.

夢味甘性醇，無毒，益神智，鬯血脈，辟煩滯，清心遠俗，令人長壽。但此藥五產，其二最良。一產於山水幽曠境，一產于方外靈奇境。皆療塵疾有功。過去境產者名留夢，服之令人憶其在。未來境曰知來之藥，今世嗜夢者咸稱此藥，然易令人入俗，亦足以增戚攀憂，非良藥，采藥者弗寶也。其一產於驚鄉，謂之驚境，夢是能拔諸沉昏，然令人狂。達人以良夢療疾，修制不假水火，閉目即成。采此藥者不問冬春夏秋，然每以夜。⁸⁹

Five realms of dreams correspond to seven dreamlands. The secluded realm of landscape corresponds to the land of mountains and rivers; the realm of the supernatural corresponds to the land of the supernatural and as-one-wishes land; the realm of surprise roughly corresponds to the land of underworld and the land of cognition; the realm of the past corresponds to the land of the past; the realm of future corresponds to the land of future. Realm (*jing*) is a seminal term in Chinese poetics, used to emphasize “a composite impression of coherence in the presented world evoked by a particular poem or by a collection of poems.”⁹⁰ Here Dong Yue uses it to describe a composite impression of coherence evoked by dreams. Since he draws inspiration from dreams, writes about dreams, and identifies dreaming with writing, it is only natural that the corollary is to use the poetic term *jing* to interpret the experience of dreams.

Realm is also a Buddhism term. It is the Chinese counterpart of Visayin in Sanskrit. Visayin has four basic meanings in Buddhism. First, it means perceptual objects and objects of cognition,

⁸⁹ *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*, 3. 12.

⁹⁰ Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, 585.

things that are apprehended and discerned by the mind and sense organs. Since it generally refers to the objects that give rise to the cognitive activity of the five/six organs, there are five/six objective realms, including color/shape, sound, odors, the flavors, and the tactile objects. In Yogâcāra 瑜伽行派⁹¹ cognitive theory, objects are distinguished into three types, based on the process of their construction. The three types include objects as in themselves 性境, objects arbitrarily manifested from a subjective view 獨影境, and things that derive from raw sensate appearance but are mistakenly perceived 帶質境.⁹² The second meaning of Visayin is mental state or condition. The third meaning is world, realm, boundary, limit, frontier, environment, and circumstances. The fourth meaning is the discernment of the Buddha's dharma, the object of excellent wisdom.⁹³ Based on the fact that realm includes correctly discerned objects, distorted objects and illusion, we may conclude that it connects objects with cognition and reflects various interplays of objects and cognition. Dong Yue's use of realm must have been influenced by the connotations of this term in Buddhism, since his dreamlands and the realms of dreams are products of the mind and sense organs. The compound "the realm of dreams" (*mengjing* 夢境) has been in use since the 7th century in the Buddhist sutra, *Mahāprajñāparamitā-sūtra* 大般若波羅蜜多經, translated by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664).⁹⁴

Because Dong Yue takes dreaming as a form of fictional writing, and writes across poetry, prose, and novel, his novel *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West*

⁹¹ The "Yoga Practice" school is an influential school of Mahāyāna Buddhism that began to develop in the fourth centuries. The proponents of this tradition explained a course of practice wherein cognitive and afflictive hindrances were removed according to a sequence of stages.

⁹² As for cognitive theory of Buddhism, see chapter three.

⁹³ [http://buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?58.xml+id\('b5883'\)](http://buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?58.xml+id('b5883')).

⁹⁴ Takakusu Junjirō & Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds., *Taishō shinshū Daizōkyō*, 85 vols., Tokyo, 1924-32, 7:976b, 978b (thereafter T).

西遊補, first published in 1641,⁹⁵ vividly echoes the realms of dreams discussed in his essays. The novel also offers the lens through which we can view Dong Yue's creation of fictional space under the influence of Buddhism. The novel is cast as the dream of its protagonist, Monkey. The most impressive plot of the novel is that Monkey unconsciously enters a tower made of lapis lazuli in his dream, which is a hallucinatory world evoked by the demon of desire. Dong Yue describes the tower as follows.

Above, a great sheet of agate formed the roof, and the floor was a huge bright slab. A couch of amethyst, ten chairs of green marble, and a glistening pink table, on which stood an onyx teapot and two turquoise bells, furnished the place. Facing him were eight sapphire blue windows, all closed.⁹⁶

The facing surfaces of lapis lazuli bounce their luminous reflections back and forth to make the tower an illusory space. The four walls of the tower are made of a million mirrors placed one above another. The mirrors have various names, such as a water mirror, a moon mirror, a stillness mirror, a nothing mirror, and etc. Instead of mirroring Monkey's image, these mirrors contain graphic displays of other heavens and earths, suns and moons, mountains and forests. Inside one mirror is the World of the Ancients. Monkey enters this mirror to look for the First Emperor of Qin, but is told that the Emperor is in the World of Oblivion which is separated from the World of the Ancients by the World of the Future. When Monkey arrives in the World of the Future, he reads a calendar that runs backward from the end of the month to the beginning. Given the fact that Monkey is in his dream and that the scenes of the other worlds are revealed in the mirrors, the mirrors are tantamount to the realms of dreams as Dong Yue describes in his essays. The World of the Ancients and the World of the Future resonate with the realms of the past and the

⁹⁵ For the editions of *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors*, see Li Qiancheng 李前程, *Xiyoubu jiaozhu* 西遊補校注 (Beijing: Kunlun chubanshe, 2011), p. 23-33.

⁹⁶ *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West*, translated by Shuen-fu Lin and Larry J. Schulz (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 2000), 37.

future. Antiquity and future are temporally separated, but they uncannily coexist as two realms in the mirror. Not only does time become space, but the normal order of time is also reversed. These descriptions vividly manifest the surreal logic of dreams Dong Yue has discussed in his essays.

A figure in one mirror, named Liu Bojin, explains to Monkey the essence of these mirrors.

Every mirror takes care of one world; and each blade of grass, each tree, everything moving and still, is contained in these mirrors. Anything one might want to see comes before one's eyes. So this tower was named "The Three-thousand Major Chiliocosms!"⁹⁷

The mirror and the realm, two homophones in Chinese, are interchangeable here because they are both illusory projections of the dreamer's unconscious mind. Liu Bojin tells Monkey, "You are in somebody else's world and I'm in your world. It's not the same place at all,"⁹⁸ meaning that Monkey is in the world of the demon of desire, whereas the mirrors as well as everything contained in them are in Monkey's mind. The worlds in the mirrors, like the realms of dreams, are virtual spaces created by the mind. In "Notes on *A Supplement to the Journey to the West*" 讀西遊補雜記, a nineteenth-century critic and editor Qian Peiming 錢培名 explains the relationship of the mind, mirrors and realms.

All illusory realms are created by the mind. The mind is the mirror. One mind has ten thousands of minds, and therefore one mirror has ten thousands of mirrors. Those who enter the mirror roam from life to death without knowing what has happened and still believe that they are in real realms.

種種幻境，皆由心造。心即鏡也。心有萬心，斯鏡有萬鏡。入其中者，流浪生死而不自知，方且自以為真境。⁹⁹

The mirror, in terms of its transformative power of creating illusions, can be identified with the

⁹⁷ Ibid., 39.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 39.

⁹⁹ *Xiyoubu jiaozhu*, p. 73.

mind, but since the mirror is the externalization of the mind, it can also be identified with the realm, the illusory product of the mind.

There has been a long tradition of mirror halls in Chinese religious, historical and literary texts. The Buddhist sutra *Saddharma-smṛty-upasthāna-sūtra* 正法念處經 describes a mirror hall which contains mirror walls that display scenes of the three grades of retribution. Because the scenes on the mirror walls are so graphic that the spectators are said to have entered the mirrors. Gao Wei 高緯 (r.65-76), the second ruler of the Northern Qi, and Yang Jun 楊俊, the prince of the Sui dynasty (581-618), both built mirror halls. Probably the most famous mirror installation in Chinese history was Yang Guang's 楊廣 (569-618) bronze mirror screens, which gave inspirations to the lore of the labyrinth tower. Among various Buddhist schools, Huayan teaching emphasizes the interpenetrability or mutual identification among all phenomena by creating mirror installations.¹⁰⁰

As the name of the tower, "The Three-thousand Major Chiliocosms," implies, Dong Yue's depiction of the tower of myriad mirrors is influenced by the spatial concept of the Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm 三千大千世界 in the Buddhist universal structure. According to the Buddhist universal structure, a Small Chiliocosm 小千世界 consists of a thousand worlds each with its Mount Sumeru 須彌山, continents, seas, and ring of iron mountains; a Medium Chiliocosm 中千世界 consists of a thousand Small Chiliocosms; a Great Chiliocosm 大千世界 consists of a thousand Medium Chiliocosms. Because A Great Chiliocosm indicates three kinds of thousands, it is also called the Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm, which mathematically

¹⁰⁰ For the tradition of mirror halls, see Eugene Y. Wang, "Oneiric Horizons and Dissolving Bodies: Buddhist Cave Shrine as Mirror Hall," in *Art History* 27, no. 4 (2004): 494-521.

contains one billion worlds.¹⁰¹ One Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm consists of the world of desire 欲界 and the first heaven of the world of form 色界. The world of desire, the world of form and the formless realm 無色界 are three realms of existence 三界. The world of desire further includes realms of purgatory, hungry spirits, animals, asuras, men and the six heavens of desire. Above Mount Sumeru are six heavens of desire, each higher than the last, including the Heaven of the four deva-kings 四王天; Trāyas-triśa, the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods 三十三天, also called *daolitian* 忉利天; Yama, the Heaven where the God Yama resides; Tuṣita 兜率天, the Heaven of contentment where the Bodhisattva Maitreya 彌勒 is said to be preparing to be reborn in the world as the next kalpa's Buddha; Nirmāṇa-rati 樂變化天, the Heaven where one's desires are magically fulfilled at will; Paranirmita-vaśa-vartin 他化自在天, the Heaven where one can partake of the pleasures of others, and also where Pipanyan, the King of the Māras, resides.¹⁰² Six heavens of desire stretch toward the world of form, which comprises seventeen heavens of form 色界十七天, divided into four dhyāna 禪天. The first heaven of the first dhyāna 初禪天 is the Heaven of Brahma's Councilors 梵眾天.

The construction of the worlds and heavens is a Buddhist cosmological way of describing the vast and interwoven universe. Dong Yue's familiarity with the Buddhist cosmology can also be found in an entry titled "Borders of the Sky" 天疆界 in *The Zhaoyang History of Dreams*.

Suddenly I saw that the sky had borders and looked like square fields. The guest told me, "This is a so and so heaven, and that is a certain heaven." All the titles were as long as more than ten characters. I regret not remembering them.

忽見天有疆界，如井田狀。客指示曰：“某天某天。”其號皆累十餘字，恨不憶矣。

¹⁰¹ [http://buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id\('b4e09-5343-5927-5343-4e16-754c'\)](http://buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id('b4e09-5343-5927-5343-4e16-754c'))

¹⁰² [http://buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?51.xml+id\('b516d-6b32-5929'\)](http://buddhism-dict.net.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?51.xml+id('b516d-6b32-5929'))

Such concepts as realms 境, borders 界 and heavens 天 are logically connected in Buddhism, all referring to spaces in the Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm. In the novel, the Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm is contained and reflected in the mirrors in the tower of myriad mirrors, and essentially in the transformative mind. Among Dong Yue's large amount of works that expound Buddhist texts, "Reading *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra*" 讀大智度論¹⁰³ is the one that sheds light on the origin of his imagination of the tower of mirrors.

In the past there was a king who could turn the wheel of the dharma, named the master of virtue. He could build five hundred pagodas in one day, with each as high as fifty Yojanas. He said that they filled the Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm. This was an allegory, but what was said is truth. If a small king could build a seven-treasure pagoda with his power, a great king could build a seven-treasure pagoda as high as one Yojana or more than one Yojana. If the small king who could turn the wheel of the dharma could build seven-treasure pagodas to fill the world, the great king who could turn the wheel of the dharma could build seven-treasure pagodas that are greater than four heavens. The king of the heaven of Brahma is the master of the Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm. This is because that the mind of Buddha's disciples can make transformations to build pagodas that reach the heaven of Brahma and fill Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm.

又過去世有轉輪王，名德主。一日起五百塔，高五十由旬。言滿三千大千世界。是事假喻，有人言皆是實有。如小國王隨力起七寶塔，大王能起一由旬七寶塔，或過一由旬。小轉輪王能起七寶塔滿四天下。大轉輪王能起七寶塔過四天下。梵天王主三千大千世界，是佛弟子能心生變化，起塔高至梵天，滿三千大千世界。

The pagoda in the above passage parallels the tower of myriad mirrors in the sense that both contain the cosmos. Another parallel can be found in *Avatamsaka Sutra* 大方廣佛華嚴經. Bodhisattva Maitreya creates a tower, within which are arrayed countless similar towers, and each tower is as vast as to contain the Three Thousand Great Chiliocosm, billions of Tusita Heavens, and etc.¹⁰⁴

Not only does Dong Yue draw inspiration from Buddhism to depict the tower of myriad mirrors, he also uses his learning of the *Book of Changes* 易經 to depict the Sixty-four Hexagram

¹⁰³ *Later Collection from the Collection of Luxuriant Grasses* 豐草庵文後集, 1.4.

¹⁰⁴ "Introduction," *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West*, 9; T 9: 780bc.

Palace, another construction evoked by the demon of desire. His amazing imagination lies in transforming images in the text into textual space. The structure of the Sixty-four Hexagram Palace is similar to the tower of myriad mirrors in its infinite multiplications. A notice in the Palace of the Hexagram of Limitation 節卦宮 explains its structure.

Limitation Hexagram Main Palace-----sixty-four large and small halls...

Limitation's Creative 乾 Hall-----sixty-four chambers...

Limitation's Receptive 坤 Hall-----sixty-four chambers...

Limitation's Peace 泰 Hall-----four hundred and six White Crane Chambers...

Limitation's Stagnation 否 Hall-----15,000 Sky-blue Chambers. Little Moon King (the demon of desire) wanted to add a mirror tower, but recently several additional worlds have emerged: a small one, the World of Current Literature, broke off from the Headache World; a Red Garment World broke off from the World of Wild Herbs; and a Book burning World broke off from the Lotus Flower World. There are countless other new split-off worlds as well. The oppressive Tower of Myriad Mirrors of the hexagram Oppression 困 cannot contain them all. Therefore, he had no choice but to build a second Tower of Myriad Mirrors here.¹⁰⁵

Monkey is intrigued by the notice. His monologue tells readers that the Palace of the Hexagram of Limitation is just a tiny portion of the Sixty-four Hexagram Palace.

I have seen the Heavenly Palace and the Isle of P'eng, too. But I've never seen anything like his Sixty-four Hexagram Palace. Now sixty-four hexagrams are not a great number but each hexagram also contains sixty-four palaces. Sixty-four times sixty-four is still a small number, but each of those again has sixty-four palaces. And this place is not the only one-----there are twelve more besides.

In the concept of the Sixty-four Hexagram Palace Dong Yue stretches the duplicative structure of space to the extreme. In ancient Chinese divination, eight trigrams, *qian* 乾, *kun* 坤, *dui* 兌, *li* 離, *zhen* 震, *xun* 巽, *kan* 坎, *gen* 艮, from the *Book of Changes* correspond to eight directions. When eight trigrams are arranged in accordance with respective directions in a map, eight trigrams and the space in the middle, called the Great Oneness 太一, constitute Nine Palaces 九宮.

¹⁰⁵ *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West*, 90-91.

Nine Palaces is a term to indicate directions, but Dong Yue transforms it into literal space.¹⁰⁶ In the *Book of Changes*, two trigrams are added to construct hexagrams; permutations of solid and broken lines can make changes in hexagrams, and sixty-four hexagrams come into being. Following the logic of permutation and multiplication, Dong Yue conceives each hexagram palace as a self-contained cosmos, within which are arrayed sixty-four hexagram palaces, including one main palace and palaces of the other sixty-three hexagrams. Of the second level of sixty-four palaces, each further contains sixty-four or more rooms. Palace of the Hexagram of Limitation is just one example given in the text to represent the structure of the Sixty-four Hexagram Palace. Besides one set of Sixty-four Hexagram Palace, there are twelve other sets of Sixty-four Hexagram Palace, so that thirteen sets of Sixty-four Hexagram Palace correspond to the Thirteen Classics. This is another example that shows Dong Yue's imagination of transforming classical texts into textual space.¹⁰⁷ Monkey's reaction to the infinite reduplications of palaces is to multiply his selves. "He plucked a handful of hairs from his body, chewed them into tiny pieces, and commanded, 'Change!' The hairs became countless little monkeys, who stood huddled together."¹⁰⁸ Spatial multiplications and the split of selves resonate with each other.¹⁰⁹ Both come from the transformative power of the dreamer/writer's mind.

Pictorial Space

¹⁰⁶ One example of Nine Palaces as an architectural term is in Li Dou's 李斗 *Yangzhou huafang lu* 揚州畫舫錄, vol. 4. There was a pagoda in Yangzhou, in imitation of the Pagoda of the Great Baoen Temple in Nanjing, arranged in accordance with Nine Palaces, Eight Trigrams, and Three Primes (Heaven, earth, water) 三元.

¹⁰⁷ Classical texts play an important role in the architectures of this novel. Not only are there Palaces of Thirteen Classics, but there are also the Palace of Three Hundred Odes 三百篇宮, the Palace of the Eighteen Songs 十八章宮, Water Palace of Crying Ospreys 關雎水宮, and etc.

¹⁰⁸ Chapter 11, *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West*, p. 91.

¹⁰⁹ In some Taoist texts, parts of the human body are compared to spaces and architectures, such as Nine Palaces and Twelve Towers 十二樓, etc. See Zhang Junfang 張君房 (11th century), *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤, 12. 1, in *Zhengtong daoang* 正統道藏 (Taiwan: Xinwenfeng gongsi, 1977), vol. 37.

In “Dreams as Herbs,” Dong Yue says that the most valuable dreams are from the realm of the supernatural and the realm of landscape. Monkey’s adventures in the tower of myriad mirrors match Dong Yue’s definition of the realm of the supernatural. If his portrayal of the realm of the supernatural is inspired by Buddhism and the *Book of Changes*, his description of the realm of landscape in the novel invokes the history of painting. As Monkey roams in the palace of the demon of desire, he comes across an old man, who takes Monkey to a fairy cave at the edge of a stream, called “Imitation of an Ancient Evening Landscape” 仿古晚郊園.

One the left there stretched a field where random stones and about ten loquat trees with riotous branches and leaves surrounded a straw cottage. At its front door stood a great red pine and several maples entwined with mist. Their trunks and branches were woven into a stormy mountain forest. A bit of bamboo fence could be seen peeking through the trees, and two or three kinds of wildflowers poked out from the bottom of the fence. A middle-aged man strolled by the stream, leaning on a moss-covered staff. Abruptly he sat down, and cupping the clear water in his hands, took it into his mouth and swished it around and around. He did this for a long while and then stood up. He looked toward the southwest and laughed casually. When Monkey saw him laugh, he looked to the southwest himself. But he saw neither high tower no green pavilion, dangerous cliffs or weird peaks. He saw only two splashes of mountain-color that looked like something between clouds and mist, between being and non-being.¹¹⁰

As is seen in his spatial imagination of the *Book of Changes*, one characteristic of Dong Yue’s fictional imagination is to make images in previous contexts become concrete.¹¹¹ A middle-aged man who swishes the clear water in the quoted text alludes to Sun Chu 孫楚 (ca. 221-294) in an entry from *A New Account of the Tales of the World*. Sun Chu intends to become a recluse, telling his friend that he will sleep on rocks and swish the flowing water 枕石漱流.¹¹² Sun Chu’s words invoke Xu You 許由, an ancient worthy who clears his ears in the clear water when he

¹¹⁰ Chapter 13, *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West*, p. 109.

¹¹¹ This is also characteristic of seventeenth century novel. For example, in Feng Menglong’s 馮夢龍 (1574-1646) “Zhuang Zixiu Beats a Drum to Achieve Great Dao” 莊子休鼓盆成大道, Zhuangzi is said to be the reincarnation of a white butterfly, and thus the butterfly in the story of Zhuangzi’s dream materializes.

¹¹² *Shishuo xinyu*, 25.6.

hears about the emperor's attempt to offer the throne to him. "Imitation of an Ancient Evening Landscape" is like an animated painting or a piece of installation art. The middle-age man plays the role of Sun Chu, who further plays the role of Xu You in a staged setting of wilderness. The man's swishing the water and laughing casually are acting, because they are gestures memorialized in texts. When Monkey follows the man's gaze and sees two splashes of mountain-color, what is in front of Monkey's eyes already becomes a typical level-distance landscape painting, with the recluse and the mountain forest on the side close to the viewer, and the empty space, something between clouds and mist, between being and non-being, on the far side. Dong Yue not only animates tradition, but also successfully creates the illusory air of the scene by presenting it as something mediated by text and painting. Interestingly, in earlier editions the fairy cave is called a painting of "Imitation of an Ancient Evening Landscape" 仿古晚郊圖.¹¹³ The unusual title inspires Qian Peiming's question, "painting, dream, or reality?" 圖耶? 夢耶? 真境耶?¹¹⁴ Since "painting" appears in the first published edition of the novel, it shows that Dong Yue portrays the scene as a painting on purpose to capture the illusory nature of the dream. Even if "painting" was a typo made by copiers, the fact that they mistook "garden" 園 as "painting" 圖 still shows the degree to which the scene evokes a painting.

As Monkey walks on, he comes upon another fairy cave, called "Imitation of the Ancient Taikun Pond" 擬古太昆池.

They were surrounded on all four sides by green peaks. Some of them lifted their faces as if looking at Heaven; some bent forward as if drinking the water; some seemed to be running, some sleeping; some looked as if they were whistling; some were sitting face-to-face like Confucian scholars; some looked like they were flying; some looked possessed by spirits; and

¹¹³ *Xiyoubu jiaozhu*, pp. 33, 187, 192.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

some were like cows, horses, and sheep. ... Monkey bent his head to look carefully at the water and saw therein a hundred encircling green peaks. On the water's rippling surface they were as beautiful as a painting of mountains and forests.¹¹⁵

The name “Taikun” refers to the Kun Pond built during the time of Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty. Here the reflections of green peaks in the pond is said to resemble a painting of mountains and forests. In the novel, images of mirrors, waters and paintings appear alternately. Monkey enters the World of the Ancients by entering a mirror in the tower of myriad mirrors, whereas falls back into the tower of myriad mirrors by jumping into a pool of blue water.¹¹⁶ Mirrors, paintings and the surface of waters have the same quality of conjuring up visual illusion. They reflect a three dimensional world or create the illusion of a three dimensional world on a two dimensional surface, offering an entrance to the illusory world.

The fact that Dong Yue depicts dreams as spiritual journeys to great landscape means that they are imbedded in the tradition of “armchair travels” 臥游, an idea first pointed out by the painter Zong Bing 宗炳 (375-443).

I have been both old and ill. I'm afraid that I cannot travel to all the famous mountains. The only thing I can do is purify my mind to observe the Tao and travel to those mountains in my armchair.

老病俱至，名山恐難遍遊。唯當澄懷觀道，臥以遊之。¹¹⁷

Just as Zong Bing, who uses landscape paintings as substitutes for mountains and rivers, Dong Yue perceives reality as mediated by landscape paintings. Thus the painting becomes an inspiration for his creation of fictional space. An entry from *The Zhaoyang History of Dreams*, “Entering a Painting” 走入畫圖, describes Dong Yue's oneiric adventure in a painting. Like

¹¹⁵ *The Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West*, p. 110.

¹¹⁶ Chapter 10.

¹¹⁷ Yu Jianhua 俞劍華, ed., Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 *Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記 (Shanghai: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 1964), 6. 129-130.

mirrors, paintings are physically impenetrable, but the depth behind the surface elicits a desire of penetration.

When I was in my senior Mr. Wang's house, a man who wore a short-sleeved green top showed me a painting with the golden inscription that read "Lu Forest". The painting depicted thousands of dark green trees, flowing clouds, and waterfalls. My eyes were moved and my spirit was transported. Suddenly I entered the painting. I walked on sands and stones, with the old bamboos in the east and west as walls. Then I walked hundreds of steps southward, reaching a big mansion, where the host not only welcomed me at the gate respectfully but also knew my name. The host showed me a violet sheet of paper that was five feet long and asked me to write an inscription. I wrote "dark mountains amid white clouds." Suddenly I came out of the painting. Mr. Wang's house was still the same as before. The guest who wore the green jacket stood courageously and looked at the painting from up to down. I looked back at the painting and felt that what had happened was like a dream far away. Only when I woke up did I realize that my entering and coming out of the painting was a dream.

在長者王君家，有人青衫短袖，展畫圖，其上金題曰“魯林”。寫為萬木蒼翠，雲流泉飛，目感神移。忽然身入畫圖，行沙石中，東西老竹為牆。又南數百步，得大廈，主人迎于門，甚恭，且知余姓名也。主人出紫箋五尺，請書。余書曰“蒼山白雲”。遽出畫中，則王君家依然向者，青衫客壯立縱觀。顧瞻畫圖，杳然如夢。及寤，乃知出入畫皆在夢也。

The framework of Dong Yue's adventure is a dream. As is said in *Zhuangzi*, "While he is dreaming, he does not know it is a dream" 方其夢也，不知其夢也。¹¹⁸ If the dream offers the first layer of illusion, his entering the painting, discovering another space in the painting, and writing calligraphy there offers the second layer of illusion. Had Dong Yue's calligraphy appeared on the painting after he came out of it, this entry can be taken as a precursor of Pu Songling's 蒲松齡 (1640-1715) short fiction "The Mural" 畫壁.¹¹⁹ While Dong Yue does not go so far as Pu Songling, his depiction of exploring pictorial space in a dream is very close to a short fiction. This shows the permeable boundary between fiction and non-fiction in Dong Yue's writing.

Dong Yue's fictional space is essentially textual space and pictorial space. This makes the connection and gap between dreaming and artistic media, such as writing and painting, a central

¹¹⁸ "Qi wu lun," *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 104, Burton Watson's translation.

¹¹⁹ In this story, a viewer of a painting enters the painting, having a love affair in it, and when he comes out of it, he notices that his adventure in the painting has changed its appearance.

issue in his depiction of fictional space. His essay “An Account of the Garden of Intent” 志園記, written in 1647, deals with this issue.

In the year of Guiwei (1643), I had several numinous and mysterious dream journeys. I was so moved that I wrote “Treatise on the Dreamlands.” One night before I carved the blocks, I was in my small building when snow had stopped and the air of the night was clear. Suddenly I dreamed ascending a ladder of clouds and reaching the so-called Frost Terrace of Antiquity. There I looked down at a forest of green plum trees, where flowers were like emerald feathers. Then I dreamed of being in Mount Lu, reaching the third valley which was extremely high, and seeing the tassel-like moist atmosphere at the belly of the mountain, just as what Huiyuan (334-416) had said. When roosters began to cry, I dreamed of sitting in a fishing boat and playing a sad song of the human world on an iron flute. Raising my head, I saw several immortals riding deer from the place where the sun was setting. I woke up, and only then did I begin to regret my fault, realizing that the dreamlands could not be recorded. In one night my dreams changed three times. In the next year, Yu Shengmin lived in the Studio of Silent Whistles¹²⁰, teaching my sons classics by Confucius and Mencius. He said, “I’m sad to see carriages running and horses galloping in the world. I’m poor, so I want to make a Garden of Intent. I hope you’ll record it for me.” I said, “Alright, what is the Garden of Intent like?” Shengmin said, “My garden only exists as intent, therefore it’s called the Garden of Intent. The abode is built against the mountain, surrounded by bamboo trees and facing a clear stream.” Then he showed me a painting of the Garden of Intent. It was as he had described. I said, “How strange! This is what I would call the dreamland. In the past, the lord Liu of Nantan (Liu Lin 劉麟 [1474-1561]) admired a towered building, but he was too poor to make it. Wen Hengshan (Wen Zhengming 文徵明 [1470-1559]) told him, ‘I can make the building for you.’ Therefore he painted the building and gave it to the lord Liu. The lord was so pleased that he named it the Spirit Tower. Then Zhu Shepi (Zhu Yuefan 朱曰藩 [jinshi 1544]) wrote ‘The Song of the Spirit Tower,’ and Yang Yongxiu (Yang Shen 楊慎 [1488-1559]) wrote ‘The Latter Song of the Spirit Tower.’ Yang’s poem has these lines, ‘Five cities and twelve towers are the abodes of immortals. /Fantong¹²¹ and Fangzhang surround Yingzhou. /¹²² Long wind guides the boat, but the boat cannot reach them, /inside the circle of images the spirit roams in vain.’ The late great historian of our family (Dong Bin 董份 [1510-1595]) wrote the ‘Preface to the Spirit Tower,’ saying that the lord accomplished great achievements early, and that at the moments of his graceful advance and retirement, he didn’t claim credit for himself, with his lofty mind beyond the common world. The preface also says that the lord’s speeches all followed sages and worthies, and that he detested vague words of immortals and spirits. The Spirit Tower still stands erect between the sky and earth today. Your Garden of Intent is like

¹²⁰ Silent Whistles is the name of the study of Dong Yue’s father, Dong Sizhang 董斯張 (1587-1628).

¹²¹ It is said that Mount Kunlun has three layers, with the lowest layer called Fantong or Bantong 板桐, the second layer called Xuanpu 玄圃 or Langfeng 閭風, and the highest layer called Cengcheng 層城 or Tianting 天庭. See Yang Shoujing 楊守敬 and Xiong Huizhen 熊會貞, eds., *Shuijing zhushu* 水經注疏, with annotations by Li Daoyuan 酈道元 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1989), 1.2. Penglai, Fangzhang, and Yingzhou are three mountains in the ocean where immortals reside. See *Shiji*, vol.6.

¹²² Penglai 蓬萊, Fangzhang and Yingzhou are said to be three islands of immortals in the sea.

Liu Lin's Spirit Tower. However, please wait for a while, because I'll also make my Tower of Dreams. Not long ago when I was on my way to the Tiao Stream, I dreamed walking in rain and crossing riotous bamboos, and in a short moment seeing two mountains standing out like a gate. I entered the gate, walking ten miles under the shade of pine trees, and then climbed on a stone tower, where tables, chairs and windows were all made of stone. On the tower was a stone plaque with seven green seal characters. The characters were like flying phoenixes. They read, 'Morning chill arises on seventy-two peaks.' Now my mind is on nothing but morning chill. When my Tower of Dreams is done, I'll also record it for you." In the next year of Yiyong (1645), Shengmin confirmed the previous appointment, saying, "I have got a famous painting on the Peach Blossom Spring. I'll make it as my Garden of Intent." I said, "Alright, but I'm busy picking up herbs (collecting dreams)." Two years later, in the year of Dinghai (1647), Shengmin wrote me a letter again, saying, "I've changed my Garden of Intent again. This is Wu Hansheng's painting 'Studying in the Abode among Crags.' I'll make it as my Garden of Intent. I hope you'll record it." I smiled and said, "That is why it's not easy to record the Garden of Intent, because intent is like dreams. Since streams and mountains are all different, how can the garden be painted? If you rely on a painting to speak of intent, I don't think that the two would match. Now that you have changed your garden three times, how do I know that your garden in the other day will not be better than the present one? However, this would suffice as a record of the Garden of Intent. Our family has a painting 'The Yellow Thatched Pavilion' by Mr. Shen Shitian (Shen Zhou 沈周 [1427-1509]). It depicts old trees and dark green vines with a man sitting and watching a cascade. Mr. Shen inscribed a quatrain on the painting, which read "The yellow thatched pavilion is near the stream, /the mountain color is slightly bright, reflected far in the sky. /In the pavilion sits a man who never stops reading. / He is never tired of watching clouds and listening to the singing stream." I value the painting very much. It is also my Garden of Intent.

癸未之歲，余數有玄怪夢遊，感而作夢鄉志。趣刻之一夕，小樓晴雪，夜氣清微，忽夢曆雲棧上，所謂太古霜台者，俯看青梅花林，花如翠羽。又夢身在廬山，至第三嶺，極高峻，見山腹雨氣縷絡，如慧遠言雞初號。復夢坐漁艇，吹鐵笛，作人間可哀之曲。仰見數騎鹿仙人從落霞邊來，覺而始大悔悟。知夢鄉之不可志也。夕三遷矣，趣碎其板。其明年湖上虞聖民氏館靜嘯，授諸子鄒魯聖賢遺文。謂余曰，我悲夫世之車奔馬馳也，而貧且為志園。願子記之。余曰諾。志園奈何。聖民曰，我園也，志而已。故名志園。依山結屋，環竹樹，臨清流，因出其圖示余。圖如其言也。余曰，異哉。此余所謂夢鄉者也。昔司空南坦劉公神慕樓居，而貧未及構。待詔文衡山曰，吾能為公遂成此樓，乃畫樓貽公。公喜而命之曰神樓。於是射陂朱子作神樓曲，而楊用修作後神樓曲。有“仙家五城十二樓，樊桐方丈繞瀛洲。長風引舟不可到，環中根像空神遊”之句。而我先太史公為司空作神樓序，則謂公早樹勳業，翩翩進退之際，功成而不有，其神在雲霄之上。立言壹本聖賢，厭諸仙靈恍惚之說。至於今司空神樓，屹然在天地間。夫聖民之志園亦司空之神樓也。雖然子姑俟之，余亦將為夢樓。頃余在苕溪道中，夢蹋雨穿亂筱，俄兩山拔立如門。余從門中行過，松陰十里，遂登一石樓，樓中幾榻窗扉皆石也。其上有石榜，碧篆七字，字如飛鳳形，其文曰“七十二峰生曉寒”。今余每飯，意未嘗不在曉寒也。余夢樓成，當並為子記之。明年乙酉，聖民徵前約曰：“我近得桃花源圖，名畫也。我將以為志園。”余曰：“諾。僕采藥未暇也。”又二年丁亥，聖民復手一紙，告余曰：“我志園又更矣。此吳憨僧岩居讀書圖也。我將以為志園，願子記之。”余乃笑曰：“此余所以記志園之不易也。夫志猶夢也。溪山各異，而園烏能圖？執圖以言志，我未見其合也。今聖民三更園矣，余又安知聖民異日之園必無勝於今日之園乎？雖然，此足以記志園矣。余家有石田沈先生黃茅亭子一幅，古木蒼藤，有人坐而觀瀑。先生自題一絕曰：‘黃茅亭子澗溪邊，山色微陽遠映天。中坐讀書人未了，看

雲不厭聽鳴泉。’余甚珍之，此亦余之志園也。’¹²³

The word *zhi* in the title, translated as “intent”, implies “ambition, deliberation, and moral purpose.”¹²⁴ It is also a lone word for *zhi* 誌, which means to record. Dong Yue’s friend Yu Shengmin was too poor to build a real garden, so he imagined modeling the Garden of Intent on a painting and asked Dong Yue to record it in writing. However, since Dong Yue attempted to build his own imaginary garden, named Tower of Dreams, in dreaming and writing, he delayed the record for Yu. During this period, Yu changed the original painting to a painting on the Peach Blossom Spring and then to a painting of Studying in the Abode among Craggs. Dong Yue observes that it is impossible to record the Garden of Intent, because the fluidity of intent defies the writer’s attempt to record it. Thus he reveals the paradox intrinsic in the word *zhi*, the tension between inevitable changes and the desire of achieving constancy. His account of the Garden of Intent is actually about the impossibility of recording the Garden of Intent. He seems to argue that language is more capable of creating illusion than image, for language can emulate the fluidity of intent by denying its own creation or expressing disappointment with it, whereas image can only create one Garden of Intent, and once it is painted, it cannot be changed.

Zhi is also a key word in Chinese poetics. That “the poem articulates what is on the mind intently” 詩言志 is the canonical statement of what poetry is.¹²⁵ Dong Yue’s own obsession with dreams inspires him to parallel intent with dreams in the formulation that “intent is like dreams” 志猶夢也. His formulation reveals the intrinsic connection between the mental state of a poet and the mental state of a dreamer. It also shows that dreaming constitutes a nexus between lyricism

¹²³ *Former Collection from the Studio of Luxuriant Grasses*, 4. 16-17.

¹²⁴ Waiyee Li, “Gardens and Illusions from Late Ming to Early Qing,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 72, no. 2 (2012), pp. 295-336.

¹²⁵ “Canon of Shun,” *Book of Documents* 尚書舜典, Stephen Owen’s translation, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, p. 26.

and fictionality. Intent and dreams parallel in three senses for Dong Yue. First, as a hermit secluded from the world, Dong Yue's ambition/intent lies in the realms of dreams. Second, intent and dreams are both amorphous. Just as Yu changed the Garden of Intent three times, Dong Yue had three dreams in one night. Third, intent and dreams both find correlatives in fictional space. If Yu's intent is defined by the fictional space in the chosen painting, Dong Yue's intent is represented by the mysterious, beautiful places in his dreams.

Dong Yue's idea of the correlation between mental state and fictional space is rooted in the late-Ming discourse of the illusions of gardens. The late Ming witnessed the creation of such imaginary gardens in texts such as Liu Shilong's 劉世龍 (17th century) Nonexistent Garden 烏有園, Sun Xinzhai's 孫新齋 (1596-after 1656) Garden of Longing 想園, and his son Sun Tanfu's 孫坦夫 Garden of Longing for Longing 想想園.¹²⁶ Three imaginary architectures mentioned in Dong Yue's essay, Liu Lin's Spirit Tower, Yu Shengmin's Garden of Intent, and Dong Yue's Tower of Dreams, belong to the same genealogy of imaginary gardens. They all undergo the transformation of intent/dream to text/painting. Like Liu's Spirit Tower, which is painted by Wen Zhengming and recorded in poems by Zhu Yuefan, Yang Shen, and Dong Yue's great grandfather Dong Bin, Yu's Garden of Intent waits to be recorded by Dong Yue. Tower of Dreams is a spatial design of Dong Yue that involves the issue of dreams of writing and writing of dreams. Just as the soul desires to go back home, Dong Yue the dreamer finds his spiritual home in Tower of Dreams. The reason that Dong Yue conceives Tower of Dreams as his spiritual home is because the poetic line "Morning chill arises on seventy-two peaks" hangs on Tower of Dreams in his dream. Since Dong Yue conceives dreaming as the nexus between lyrical and fictional writing, getting a poetic line from a dream symbolizes the realization of his

¹²⁶ As for the trend of writing about illusory gardens since the late Ming, see Waiyee Li, "Gardens and Illusions from Late Ming to Early Qing."

conception of dreaming. He is so proud of this line that he superimposes fiction upon reality. He uses Tower of Dreams to redefine space in reality by naming his residence Tower of Morning Chill 曉寒樓 and the pond in front of his house Pond of Dreaming Stone Tower 夢石樓塘.

Both the creation of Garden of Intent and Tower of Dreams involves three steps. In the case of Garden of Intent, the process of creation is from intent to painting and to writing. In the case of Tower of Dreams, the process of creation is from a simple dream to a more detailed dream of the same place and to writing. Painting and writing are artistic media that flesh out and reify intent and dreams, though Dong Yue knows that they are just imperfect media. In both cases, the ultimate goal is “in a trial of void and nothing to demand of it being” 課虛無以責有. As many writers and painters before Dong Yue who are haunted by the fact that artistic media fail to emulate intent/conceptions, Dong Yue’s regret can be described in Lu Ji’s formulation: “Writing is not equal to conceptions” 文不逮意.¹²⁷ Dong Yue reiterates the struggle between amorphous intent and artistic media from a dreamer’s unique perspective. He stretches the imaginary connotation of Chinese poetics to the extreme by conflating it with the experience of dreams. To him writing is not to encounter and capture something in reality, as is explicated in Chinese poetics, but to match something invented purely by the mind. In this sense, “An Account of the Garden of Intent” can be read as an allegory of the difficulty of fictional writing.

One of Dong Yue’s most original essays on the relationship between writing and painting also involves his reiteration of central questions in Chinese poetics and his creation of fictional space. In the preface to his treatise “Expositions of the *Book of Changes*” 易發,¹²⁸ he imagines drawing

¹²⁷ Lu Ji, “The Poetic Exposition on Literature,” translation by Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, pp. 118, 80.

¹²⁸ *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四庫全書存目叢書 (Jinan: Qilu shushe chubanshe, 1997), ser. 1, vol. 26.

two illustrations of *Shiji* 史記. The first illustration is of “Basic Annals of Qin” 秦本紀 (*Shiji*, vol. 5). “The peak in the middle stands out abruptly, flanked with two tower-like peaks. The water in front of the mountain overflows, whereas the water behind the mountain stops flowing. The water has tributaries. The entire scene is wondrous.” 中峰雄起特立，限若天闕，自山已前水勢溢，自山已后水止不流。其水有枝流，絕奇。 The second illustration is of “The Hereditary House of Weizi of Song” 宋微子世家 (*Shiji*, vol.38). “I painted three peaks thrusting out to the sky. The momentum of the main peak is latent at the beginning. The peak on one side bulges and spreads its wings. It is like drooping clouds that look down at the main peak. The peak on the other side is narrow, but it is so steep that no one could violate it. The water crosses the peaks on the two sides and circles the main peak. The lower reaches of the water surge and rush.” 則畫三峰插漢，其主峰起勢潛伏。其一客峰隆起展翼，若垂天之云，若俯而視主峰。又一客峰差狹矣，然寒峭不可犯。水穿客峰，從主峰間回環而流，其末流激悍注射，踴躍飛越。

Dong Yue explains that in the first illustration the peak in the middle signifies Qin and the water in front of and behind the mountain signifies the plots from “Basic Annals of Qin” that involve the rise of the Qin Kingdom during the reign of Duke Mu of Qin 秦穆公 (659-621 B. C.).

Qin was in remote Yongzhou, and didn't ally with the states of the central land. It was treated like a state of barbarians. Qin is the peak in the middle. The water of the peak originates from those who raised horses. Grand Master of Five Sheets of Black Sheepskin is one tributary. Inside one tributary are sub-tributaries, one of which is Prince Tui who loved cattle. Three hundred people at the foot of the Qi Mountain who ate the meat of a good horse constitute a tributary that mysteriously flows contrary to the current. ...

秦僻在雍州，不與中國諸侯之會盟，夷翟遇之，此中峰也。其水源發於息馬，五穀大夫，一枝流也。其枝流之中，又有枝流焉，則王子頹好牛也。岐下食善馬者三百人，一枝流逆行而奇也。 ...

Dong Yue's explication seems elusive, but when read against “Basic Annals of Qin,” it shows that he transforms the linear plots of the chapter into pictorial space. Because all the chosen plots have something to do with the raising, exchanging, or selling of animals, Dong Yue says that the

water originates from those who raised horses. Grand Master of Five Sheets of Black Sheepskin refers to Baili Xi 百里奚, who was originally a minister of the state Yu 虞 but ended up being a talented advisor of Duke Mu. When Yu was defeated by the state Jin 晉, Baili Xi was captured by Jin and sent to Qin as a servant of the wife of Duke Mu. Baili Xi then fled to the state Chu 楚 and was imprisoned there. Appreciating Baili Xi's political talents, Duke Mu redeemed him from Chu with five sheets of black sheepskin, and hence the title Grand Master of Five Sheets of Black Sheepskin. Grateful to Duke Mu's recognition, Baili Xi recommended to him Jianshu 蹇叔, another talented minister, by telling him stories of Jianshu's superior perception. One story involves Prince Tui 子頹 of the Zhou dynasty. Because Prince Tui liked cattle, Baili Xi once submitted cattle to him to seek favor. Prince Tui was so pleased that he asked Baili Xi to be his minister, but Jianshu persuaded Baili Xi to decline the offer. Jianshu proved to be perspicacious, for Prince Tui was later executed when his insurgence failed. Dong Yue depicts Duke Mu's redemption of Baili Xi as a tributary and Baili Xi's dealings with Prince Tui as a sub-tributary, because the first story is a main plot whereas the second story is a subplot, and because the redemption of Baili Xi in the first plot helps Duke Mu acquire Jianshu in the second one. "Three hundred people at the foot of the Qi Mountain who ate the meat of a good horse" refers to a story that describes Duke Mu's generosity to his people. Duke Mu once lost a good horse which turned out to be eaten by over three hundred common people of Qin. Rather than punishing them, Duke Mu gave them wine to go with the horse meat. Later when Jin got the upper hand over Qin in a battle, these people repaid Duke Mu by turning Qin's defeat into victory. Dong Yue depicts this plot as a tributary that flows against the current to show that the result is unexpected.

In the second illustration that depicts "The Hereditary House of Weizi of Song," the peak in the middle signifies Weizi 微子 and the peaks on two sides signify Jizi 箕子 and Bigan 比干.

Jizi is the peak on one side. It carries Jizi's sigh over King Zhou when Zhou began to use ivory chopsticks. It also records the musical piece "Jizi's Moral Principles." ... Prince Bigan is the peak on the other side. Weizi is the peak in the middle. There are three peaks all together. ... The behavior of the state Song repeated what King Zhou had done, so it deserved to be punished. The water of Song originates from "Basic Annals of Yin." In "The Hereditary House of Weizi of Song," the way of Heaven is water that crosses the peaks on the two sides. Meteorites fell like rain. Mars stayed in the Heart Mansion. These are both tributaries. ...
箕子一客峰也，載象箸之嘆，載箕子操。... 王子比干一客峰也，與微子主峰而三。... 宋其復為紂，所為不可不誅。其水源遠自《殷本紀》來也。《宋微子世家》以天道為水脈，貫穿客峰，隕星如雨，熒惑守心，皆支流。...

Still, Dong Yue's explication must be read against "The Hereditary House of Weizi of Song" to be fully understood. Jizi was an uncle of the notorious tyrant, King Zhou of the Yin dynasty. Seeing that Zhou began to use ivory chopsticks, he lamented that Zhou would indulge in the luxuries and the Yin would decline. Zhou ignored Jizi's remonstrance, but Jizi refused to leave, willing to be a slave for Zhou. He composed a piece of *qin* music to express sadness, which was later called "Jizi's Moral Principle." Prince Bigan was another uncle of King Zhou. He was killed after he offended Zhou by remonstrance. Weizi was Zhou's half-brother. He believed that the minister was not obligatory to stay if the king never respected the minister's remonstrance, so he left the Yin. After King Wu of the Zhou dynasty conquered the Yin, Weizi was acknowledged as the legitimate heir of the Yin and enfeoffed in the state Song, becoming the founding father of Song. During the reign of Duke Xiang of Song, Song sought to be the leader of all the states, only to precipitate its decline. In the seventh year of the reign of Duke Xiang, many comets fell on the land of Song, which was interpreted to be disaster omens. After Duke Xiang's untimely death, Song went on a downward trajectory as expected. In the thirty-seventh year of the reign of Duke Jing 景公 (480 B.C.), Mars stayed in the Heart Mansion, one of twenty-eight mansions of Chinese constellations, which corresponds to Scorpius of European constellations. Mars was associated with death, famine, and war in ancient Chinese astronomy. The Heart Mansion has three stars, which were believed to symbolize the king and princes. The celestial phenomenon

that Mars moved to the Heart Mansion was interpreted to prophesy the death of the king.¹²⁹ Also, twenty-eight mansions corresponded to different areas of China. Song belonged to the area governed by the Heart Mansion. Duke Jing was told that he could prevent the disaster from befalling him by transferring it to ministers, people, or the year's harvest, but he insisted on facing his own fate. As if moved by Duke Jing's integrity, Mars soon left the Heart Mansion, and Duke Jin did not die until over twenty years later.

Dong Yue reads "The Hereditary House of Weizi of Song" as a moral story. He depicts Jizi, Bigan, and Weizi, three characters who realized moral principles by self-exile, death, or self-preservation, as three peaks in the illustration. The depiction of the main peak with latent momentum suggests that Weizi's posterity was about to ascend to prominence. The depiction of the awe-inspiring peaks on two sides suggests that Jizi and Bigan are moral exemplars. The water in the illustration signifies morality, the main theme of the chapter, which Dong Yue calls "the way of Heaven." It originates from "Basic Annals of Yin," because the imperial family of Song descended from the Yin. It circles the two peaks that signify Jizi and Bigan, because two figures best embody moral principles. The omens of comets and Mars in the Heart Mansion are tributaries, because they are read as warnings against Song rulers' misconduct or reward to their good deeds.

Dong Yue's illustrations of *Shiji* are premised on the metaphor of writing as mountains and rivers in Chinese poetics. He explains the meanings of the mountains and rivers in his illustrations in this way: "The part of writing that springs high above the ground is the mountain.

¹²⁹ As for the political significance of the celestial phenomena that Mars stays in the Heart Mansion in ancient Chinese history, see Huang Yinong 黃一農, "Zhongguo zhanxingxue shang zuixiongde tianxiang" 中國占星學上最兇的天象: "熒惑守心," in *Shehui tianwenxueshi shijiang* 社會天文學史十講 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2004), pp. 23-48.

What flows and rushes in the mountain is the water.” 文之拔地而起者，山也；其間流動而奔赴者，水也。He believes that Sima Qian’s travels around China made him able to “select the fresh air of mountains and rivers and infuse it to his writing.” 采江山秀氣，發為文章，and that his writing reflects “the images of five great mountains and four great rivers” 五嶽四瀆之象。¹³⁰ The analogy between writing and landscape has a long tradition. Water is a versatile metaphor for writing with rich implications. Water implies source in classical Chinese, thus writing as water means it is grounded on ancient texts. Water is represented in many forms, rapids, brooks, mainstreams, tributaries, and etc., thus it implies different writing styles. The fact that water never stops flowing implies that writing must have a consistent theme. The momentum of flowing water evokes the vitality of writing. Mountains and rivers are traditional metaphors for Confucian sages and worthies, so the corollary is that their writing has the quality of mountains and rivers. Recluses find refuge in mountains and rivers, so their writing is often said to have the air of beautiful landscape. Perhaps one of the most influential analogy between writing and water is from Su Shi’s “On Writing” 文說. “My writing is like a fountainhead that has thousands of gallons of water. Water doesn’t choose where it comes out. When on the ground, it easily flows thousands of miles a day. When it meets rocks, it meanders, and its form is given by the thing it encounters. In this case I don’t how quickly it flows. What I know is that it often flows when it must and stops when it must.” 吾文如萬斛泉源，不擇地皆可出。在平地滔滔汨汨，雖一日千里無難。及其與山石曲折，隨物賦形，而不可知也。所可知者，常行於所當行，常止於不可不止。The late Ming and early Qing period witnessed the climax of the analogy between writing and landscape. This can be found in prefaces, commentaries, and private letters by almost all important literati of the period, including Jiao Hong 焦竑 (1540-162), Tu Long 屠隆 (1543-1605), Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道

¹³⁰ Quoted in Zhao Hongjuan, *Ming yimin Dong Yue yanjiu*, pp. 314-5.

(168-1610), Yuan Zhongdao 袁中道 (1575-1630), Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664), Tan Yuanchun 譚元春 (1586-1637), Feng Ban 馮班 (1602-1671), Mo Bingqing 莫秉清 (ac. 1640s), Mao Xianshu 毛先舒 (1620-1688), and etc.¹³¹ Dong Yue's reference to rivers and mountains is embedded in this tradition, but he makes the images of mountains and rivers become concrete to achieve fictional effects, as he does with eight trigrams from the *Book of Changes* and the phrase from *A New Account of the Tales of the World*. In other words, he adds a fictional dimension to the poetics of landscape. The momentum of mountains and the movement of rivers in his depiction of two illustrations are not just metaphors for writing. Mountains and rivers become signifiers of basic elements of narrative, i.e. characters and plots.

Dong Yue's illustrations show the potential of using pictorial images as signifiers. Unlike most illustrations that accompany narrative, his illustrations are not narrative paintings, but transform *Shiji* narrative into spatial designs. "The part of writing that springs high above the ground is the mountain. What flows and rushes in the mountain is the water." In his illustrations, mountains signify main characters that stand out in the *Shiji* narrative and rivers signify main plots or themes that put all parts of the narrative together. Anyone who has read Dong Yue's depiction of his illustrations cannot help but change the way in which they read *Shiji*, perceive landscape paintings, or interpret the dynamics between narrative and illustration. This means that his illustrations change the conventions of both writing and painting. While historical figures and events metamorphose into landscape, landscape carries historical, moral significance.

¹³¹ Jiao Hong, "Ke liangSu jingjie xu" 刻兩蘇經解序, Tu Long, "Wenlun" 文論, Yuan Hongdao, "Xu Xiaoxiu shi" 敘小修詩, Yuan Zhongdao, "Zhonglang xiansheng quanxixu" 中郎先生全集序, "W Biaohai xiansheng shixu" 吳表海先生詩序, Tan Yuanchun, "Dongpo shixuanxu" 東坡詩選序, "Gu wenlan bianxu" 古文瀾編序, Qian Qianyi, "Xu Yuantan shixu" 徐元歎詩序, Feng Ban, "Ma Xiaoshan tingyunxixu" 馬小山停雲集序, Mo Bingqing, "Guwen xuanyao bianxu" 古文玄要編序, Mao Xianshu, "Linongci xu" 麗農詞序, in *Mingdai wenlunxuan* 明代文論選, pp. 248, 254, 315, 341, 344, 406-7, *Qingdai wenlunxuan* 清代文論選, pp. 11, 43, 120, 185.

Dong Yue's idea of drawing illustrations of *Shiji* must be influenced by the trend of attaching illustrations to printed books since the Wanli 萬曆 reign (1573-1619). *Collected Illustrations of the Three Realms* 三才圖會, an encyclopedia that features illustrations of subjects in the three realms of heaven, earth, and humanity, was published in 1609. The encyclopedia includes categories from astronomy and geography to history and biographies. The idea behind this massive project, the attempt to explain everything in the world in terms of illustration, is certainly shared by Dong Yue's illustrations of *Shiji*. The period also witnessed the popularity of illustrations of printed plays and fiction. For example, the earliest edition of Dong Yue's *A Supplement to Journey to the West* carries sixteen illustrations, which can be read as commentary on the novel. Some of them clearly depict the plots of the novel, but some, such as the illustrations of a green bamboo broom and a flaming rock, are more ambiguous and may symbolize desire and detachment.¹³² One cannot help but think that the depiction of these images as symbolic signs is in the same vein as mountains and rivers in Dong Yue's illustrations. In addition, Dong Yue had close connection with painters such as Jin Junming 金俊明 (1602-1675), Wang Shimin 王時敏 (1592-1680), and Huang Zhouxing 黃周星 (1611-1680), and the famous publisher of woodblock prints, Min Qiji 閔齊伋.¹³³ His interaction with them must have also contributed to his cross-media imagination.

After all, the key to Dong Yue's amazing imagination must be found in his own words. As is pointed out, one of Dong Yue's dreamlands is the realm of the supernatural in which the boundary between animals and plants is broken. Similarly, his illustrations of *Shiji* bridge the gap between the human world and nature. If dreaming is a form of fictional writing for him, his

¹³² See Robert Hegel, "Picturing the Monkey King: Illustrations of the 1641 Novel *Xiyou bu*," in Ming Wilson and Stacey Pierson eds., *The Art of the Book in China* (London: University of London, 2006), pp. 175-91.

¹³³ See Zhao Hongjuan, pp.112-21, 173-4.

writing also carries an air of dreams, and both his dreaming and writing involve the exploration of space.

Conclusion

Wai-yee Li has pointed out that “contending or dispensing with historical moorings results in a new poetics of space” in early Qing literature and that the phrase “no place” 無地 recurs in writings from this period.¹³⁴ “Most pitiable of all—there is no place to bury sorrow” 最憐無地可埋憂 (Chen Zilong 陳子龍 [1608-47]); “Over nine continents, no place to bewail mountains and rivers” 九州無地哭山河 (Xu Lingyu 許令瑜 [d. 1650]); “Just when in all under heaven there is no place for mountains and waters” 天下正無山水地 (Qu Dajun 屈大均 [1630-96]); “Amidst rivers and mountains, no place for boundaries between Chinese and barbarians” 江山無地限華夷 (Chen Gongyin 陳恭尹 [1631-1700]).¹³⁵ While these poets lament the lack of place in the world, Zhang Dai and Dong Yue, two literati discussed in the paper, redefine and create fictional time/space through the act of writing, dreaming, and painting. The idea that the country was in ruin and convulsion as well as the political connotations of temporal/spatial phrases provoked the early Qing remnant subjects to redefine and create fictional time/space. The inspiration of their temporal/spatial imagination comes from previous texts, and in turn they create textual, discursive spaces that can be seen as variations of the canonical textual space in Chinese cultural history, the Peach Blossom Spring. Space is different from place in that while a place is often self-contained and titled, space suggests infinity, anonymity, and freedom. By entitling space, they add moral, political meanings to space and transform it to place that belongs to them.

¹³⁴ Wai-yee Li, “Introduction,” *Trauma and Transcendence in Early Qing Literature*, p. 44.

¹³⁵ All quoted in “Introduction,” pp. 44-6.

My goal of this study is twofold. The first is to situate the remnant subjects' redefinition and creation of fictional time/space in the context of the Ming-Qing transition to analyze the historical, political meanings of their temporal/spatial imagination. The fact that they celebrate the power of writing in restoring the moral order of the world, and that they associate fictional space with the preservation of books and the freedom of writing suggest the adversity of writers and writing in the early Qing. I juxtapose their writings of the tragic fate of books and of the secret places of sacred books with the history of censorship and self-censorship from the late Ming to the early Qing to show the interaction between the history of books and temporal/spatial imagination inspired by books and the writings about books. The remnant subjects' refusal to move forward with the social, political order of the new dynasty and their attempt to subvert it through writing translate into their creation of textual, discursive space and their refuge in it.

If the first goal is to reveal the historical, political significance of the redefinition and creation of fictional time/space, the second goal is to explore the significance of this phenomenon in literary history. The remnant subjects' creation of fictional time/space in both fictional and non-fictional genres reveals the fluid boundary between genres, reflecting the trend of cross-genre writing and the close interaction between writing and visual culture during the late Ming and early Qing. Dong Yue, in particular, conceives dreaming as a form of writing and the nexus between lyricism and fictionality, thus innovating on Chinese poetics by adding a fictional dimension to lyrical tradition. I analyze intellectual/Buddhist, literary, and pictorial influences on Dong Yue's creation of fictional time/space, aiming to reveal the ways in which he adds fictional effects to previous texts and animates tradition.

Epilogue

Allegory of the Peach Blossom Spring

The story of the Peach Blossom Spring is a favorite topic among the early Qing literati, partly because it best represents the combination of lyricism and fictionality. The depiction of the Peach Blossom Spring can be found in both early Qing literature and painting. Just as the literary texts about the Peach Blossom Spring discussed in chapter five depict it as a place beyond the human world, early-Qing paintings convey the fictional nature of the Peach Blossom Spring. In an album leaf from Xiang Shengmo's 項聖謨 (1597-1658) *Landscape* 山水冊 (1658), a huge cliff rendered in light-dark stripes diagonally crosses the upper left triangle of the painting and overlaps a cloud-shrouded cliff on the right side. Two cliffs form an arch, below which are two thatched huts half hidden in whirling clouds surrounded by dark green trees. The huts enveloped in clouds evoke the Peach Blossom Spring. The composition that the utopia like place is hidden in the recesses behind the cliffs implies that it exists in the past. Xiang Shengmo's inscription indicates that what is painted is an alternative world he desires more than any worldly achievement. Similarly, two album leaves from Xiao Yuncong's 蕭云從 (1596-1673) *Landscape* 山水冊 (1645) depict the Peach Blossom Spring as a place in the inmost recesses of history. The bright colors of the album leaves evoke landscape paintings of blue and green colors from the Tang dynasty, suggesting the painter's nostalgia for the past. In addition, he experiments with the visual manifestations of the idea of living outside normal time and space by using decorative, two-dimensional images to render the phenomenology of timeless, dreamlike space.

The early Qing literati's obsession with the theme of the Peach Blossom Spring reveals two central concerns of the period, taking refuge in the past and rewriting tradition. These are also the issues my dissertation explores. My study shows that the early Qing literati innovate on Chinese

poetics and lyricism thanks to the cataclysmic upheavals during the Ming-Qing transition and the development of drama and fiction since the sixteenth century. In the first two chapters, I examine the early Qing literati's reinterpretations of Confucian poetics. The first chapter presents the confrontation between lyrical self and theatrical self, showing that the loyal remnant subjects take poetry as the reification of their sufferings whereas the dramatists regard dramatic writing as a way of transcending sufferings. The second chapter shows the interaction of lyrical self and theatrical self in early Qing poetics that associates poetry with drama and fiction by adding a theatrical and playful dimension to poetry. The rest of the dissertation take the early Qing literati's *ci* poetry and prose as specific examples to show that the influence of drama and fiction change the conventions of these nonfictional genres.

The same question that occupies the early Qing literati's literary theory and literary works as well as my study is the meaning of literary writing. Different cultures of different historical contexts may offer different answers to this question. Literary writing could sublimate the writer's desire, allow him to engage in politics, or offer him a refuge. As the "realm of shadows and dreams" in the title of my dissertation suggests, for the early-Qing literati discussed in my dissertation, literary writing constructs an interior world in terms of imagination and illusion, a discursive world that helps them fight against the invasion of an alienating sociopolitical reality. In this sense, the Peach Blossom Spring is a perfect allegory of the early Qing literati's idea of literary writing. The early Qing literati conceive of the Peach Blossom Spring as a library where books lost in the human world are preserved. Following this logic, we can further read the story of the Peach Blossom Spring as an allegory of reading and writing. The fisherman happened to find the entrance to an idyllic utopia, in the same way that a reader or a writer sees a flash of inspiration. Inspiration is irretrievable once it is lost, just as "no one else ever sought the ford" 無

問津者¹ after the fisherman. The early Qing literati discussed in my dissertation tried to emulate the fisherman, recording what was lost in the human world in their writings. By telling the story of their struggles and achievements in a tumultuous era, I have tried to bring their imaginary world to our contemporary discussions across the boundaries of time, place, and language.

¹ “Account of the Peach Blossom Spring,” in *Tao Yuanming ji jiaojian*, p. 403.

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